

FALSE FRIENDSHIP;

OR,

NATURE IN MASQUERADE.

A NOVEL.

FOUNDED IN TRUTH.

CONSISTING OF LETTERS

Which have actually passed between

PERSONS IN FASHIONABLE LIFE,

UPON THE MOST

AFFECTING SUBJECTS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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FALSE FRIENDSHIP :

OR

NATURE IN MASQUERADE:

LETTER XXXVI.

COL. E——D to JAMES M——Y, Esq.

IT is one of the glories of Lewis XIV. to have used all his power and authority for the abolition of duels.—Oh this cursed duelling!—I have killed poor *Mandeville*. When I reflect on the goodness of his heart, his elegance of manners, his greatness of mind, enriched with all the solidity of understanding and delicacy of sentiment, my conscience tortures me in the extreme. I am wounded, though not mortally. O! my poor miserable soul! And yet, wretched as I am, I have not conquered my passion for his wife—nor shall any thing short of death itself deter me from the execution of my plan. Yes, my dear *Clara*, thou must be mine—the fates have so ordained it.

Aided by the contrivances of the subtle

B 2

Miss

Miss *Hervey*, whose rancorous inflexibility originated in jealousy, and an unconquerable passion for *Henry Walpole*, I had fondly flattered myself with the possession of her person without proceeding to the desperate extremities which have taken place ; this induced me to desert *Maria Godfrey* sooner than I intended. Poor girl ! hadst thou seen her, *James*, when I undeceived her in regard to her marriage, thy honest, sentimental soul would have been torn with anguish. Upon my recommending a friend of mine to her as her protector, “ Oh what a vile wretch hast thou made of me ! (cried she) and wouldst thou reduce me to a still more abject state of wretchedness—to voluntary prostitution ! But say, Sir, am I not your wife ? —Am I indeed that wretch your baseness describes me ? ” She trembled with impatience and indignation, whilst I, with all the resolution I could muster, unfolded the mystery to her. She then clasped her hands with a wildness that alarmed me ; folded her infant to her breast, and, covering her face, uttered such piercing sighs as almost induced me to forego my purpose. But the
recolle^{ct}ion

recollection of *Clara Mandeville* fortified my resolution. I told her, business called me abroad, and took the opportunity of her retiring to the window for air to quit the room, leaving a purse on the table.

A blessed situation I am reduced to, I suppose you think ; confined by my wounds, upbraided by my conscience, and meriting the united execrations of the injured *Clara* and *Maria* ! yet I am determined to persevere—But I hear Miss *Hervey* and the Surgeon on the stairs—Hasten to me, dear *Medley*, and comfort

Your sincere friend,

E*****

LETTER XXXVII.

Mr. W——G to Sir ROBERT S——G.

I FEAR I shall find it difficult to quit this island, where urbanity and hospitality captivate the hearts of those who visit it. The natives, though their address appears

B 3

reserved

reserved at first, yet their treatment of the distressed, and of strangers, is exceeding kind and hospitable.

My dear *Evelina* is enraptured with the situation of our house, and is forming numerous embellishments for the garden which I resign entirely to her directions.

I never loved her with half the fervor I now experience, till she became my wife. This I consider as a happy presage that our affections will prove of such a permanent nature as to bid defiance to time, and cease but with our lives.

On several spots about our farm, are small groves of trees, capable of furnishing timber for houses, or masts for the navy. Our meadows are loaded with spontaneous crops of herbage; and the avenue that leads to our lodge, is decorated with young poplars and evergreens; whilst a winding stream glides along the margin of our park, watering the roots of many branching willows; and which, being well stocked with trout, affords the most charming diversion to the angler, and a luxurious repast for our table.

The

The ancient inhabitants of this island seem to have taken great delight in subterraneous dwellings, for there is not a building of any note without a number of rooms under it ; and some of these, I am credibly informed, formerly, were richly ornamented with carvings, and tessellated pavements, which gave them a very grand and splendid appearance.

Many of the natives of this isle are much addicted to superstition ; though there are some whose refined ideas, delicate sensibility, and elegant deportment, might challenge competition with any part of the three kingdoms. Those who are superstitious, poor creatures, are so through want of education. As cultivation improves a bad soil, and changes a desert into fertile fields, so education transplants us from the wilds of ignorance into the beautiful gardens of science, where we gather the richest fruit.

I am sincerely yours,

C. W*****

LETTER XXXVIII.

Miss H——E to Mrs. M——E,
Portland Street.

Richmond, Yorkshire.

I WISH I could extricate you, my dear *Clara*, from the difficulties you are unhappily involved in with that villain *Elwood* ! How greatly have you been deceived in Miss *Hervey* ! I know not what she has said, or how represented you, to your worthy friend Mr. *Brook*, but I find, by my sister *Lavington*, that she has greatly prejudiced him against you. As to that vile monster, the *Colonel*, I detest his name.

There has been a little misunderstanding between *Colonel Lavington* and his dear *Caroline* : in the midst of their conjugal felicity, founded in the full enjoyment of every rational virtue and affection, and surrounded with all the elegance of life, fate, it seems, is determined to annihilate the fatal delusion. The *Colonel* is of a gay temper ; his
gallantry

gallantry has led him into errors—he has been escorting *Mrs. Travers* about the country—She has learned the singular address of uniting simplicity with refinement—of reconciling art and ease. You must know, my dear *Clara*, I never liked her since the night she danced with *Captain Parker* : I hate her for the pain she gave me then ; yet it is but just to say, she is what they call a very charming woman. *Caroline* is all sensibility and patience ; I hope no part of her conduct could disgust or urge him to seek for happiness abroad. If he was mine I would teach him the duties of a husband. If my *Captain* was but to think of another woman, even for a moment, I would discard him. But *Colonel L.* is a sensible and good-natured man ; he has a generous feeling mind, and I hope will return that heart she has a claim to, with redoubled affection. She is writing to you : dare you be a mediator betwixt them ? You are a favourite of both.

I long to hear from my gentle sailor. Oh that he may return in triumph ! You will say I am selfish in that wish ; but I
knew

knew not the power he had over my heart till fate called him away. And here is a group of weeping females, each sighing for a fight of their beloved warriors, declaring they would never marry, if deprived of their favourite lover; yet dreading the idea of being old maids. As to my own part, I declare against marriage if my little *Captain* should fall a sacrifice for his King and Country; but at the expence of an eye or a leg, your *Louisa* would receive him with the warmest esteem, with a heart more than ever devoted to his merit.

Adieu! my dearest *Clara*, may Heaven preserve you in honour and safety, is the prayer, the hourly prayer, of

Your affectionate Friend,

LOUISA HOWE.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIX.

Mr. M——Y to COLONEL E——D.

I AM sorry to hear of the unfortunate accident that has happened to you, and Mr. *Mandeville's* death. You may think yourself well off, that you have escaped with your life. The generous *Horatio* has acquitted you on his death-bed, I am told; and would you plant daggers in the bosom of his unfortunate widow, by attempting her? For God's sake, my friend, drop your pursuit! Let not ingratitude add to your faults.

I am inexpressibly concerned at the fate of the innocent, deceived *Maria*. She could not have fallen into worse hands than your's. How could you behold her phrensy when she knew she was not your wife? Her proofs of love in her distressing sorrow—pressing your
 infant

infant to her bleeding heart—and yet eta in your cruel purpose to desert her? You are answerable for all the evils she is likely to fall into.

My horses are at the door. I am engaged to dine with a relation of Miss *Hervey*. I am truly sorry *Harriet* has had a hand in so base an affair. I acknowledge myself a rake, yet I never drew the curses of a parent on my head, or attempted the virtue of my friend's wife. It grieves me, however, to hear you are so ill; that you may soon get the better of it, and all your errors, dear *Colonel*, is the sincere wish of

Your obliged Friend,

JAMES MEDLEY.

LETTER

LETTER XL.

Miss B——N to Miss H——E, Richmond,
Yorkshire.

Wilding Park.

AN enchanting ball, my dear Miss *Howe*! Your little *Lydia's* head is turned. My partner was not only elegant but handsome, and has a pretty estate, I am told: I will think further of it, it is only whispering to some of his brother officers that I think him a pretty fellow; and he will be surprised he did not find out before that I was the handsomest girl in Douglas.

I was surprised to see so many elegant dressed women, who danced finely, and in the most fashionable stile; but one in particular took my attention; she was moving a minuet with a very handsome young fellow, who appeared to be her lover; she was a divine creature—you see, *Louisa*, I have no envy in my nature.

On

On enquiring who this charming couple were, I soon learnt that the lady was the gentle *Juliet Dear*; and her partner, an officer in the Royal Manks Fencibles. Oh, my poor uncle! thought I, you may wear the willow—*Evelina* and I were impatient to be introduced to the sweet girl; which my partner soon after took an opportunity of doing, as he had the pleasure of being acquainted with her. She was ease and elegance itself, and the native innocence and simplicity in her countenance, prejudiced every one in her favour at first sight. My sister *Wilding* took the first opportunity of mentioning my uncle *Bateman*, and the tender esteem he expressed for her. A gentle sigh escaped her, while a deep blush died her cheeks. “I rejoice, ladies, (said the sweet *Juliet*,) to hear Mr. *Bateman* enjoys his health,” while her expressive eyes were still cast on the ground. Mr. *Wilding* is charmed with her; and *Evelina* declares she shall be the sister of her heart: so your poor *Lydia* is to be cast off, as too insignificant a being to merit their attention any longer.

longer. We are to have a concert to night ; and *Juliet Dear*, is to favour us with her company. But I see my partner, the lord of my wishes, coming up the avenue ; how graceful does he ride ! How negligently easy ! Farewel, for a while, dear *Louisa* ! I fly to meet my soldier, who seems brimful of love, and some important news.

I am affectionately yours,

LYDIA BATEMAN.

LETTER XLI.

Mrs. LAVINGTON to Mrs. MANDEVILLE.

Ely Grove.

HAPPINESS, at present, has fled from Ely Grove. *Colonel Lavington's* particular attention to Mrs. *Travers*, has alarmed my fears, and raised unfavourable suspicions in my breast

breast. That she has charms is undeniable; but surely, my dear *Clara*, a man of *Colonel Lavington's* sense should have sufficient fortitude to resist the attraction of mere personal beauty, particularly when he considers that the elevated situation in which he moves, calls for a more than ordinary share of rectitude, in order to operate as an example to the neighbourhood.

He just now entered the room, and, finding me in tears, upbraided me with being jealous and ill-tempered; a disagreeable altercation then ensued, after which he departed, leaving me overwhelmed with grief and consternation, with no other consolation than that of my babe.

Earnestly do I wish that he may be convinced of the impropriety of his conduct, and restore me that heart which I fondly thought was invariably mine; gladly would I receive the wanderer, nor would one upbraiding word, or unkind thought retard his progress back to the paths of virtue. Till this much-wished for change takes place

place, may Heaven inspire me with fortitude to bear the horrid vicissitude, and give me resignation to its severe decree.

Adieu, my dear *Clara*; let me hear from you, by return of post; and be assured, however disagreeable my own situation may be, I shall at all times sympathize in your sorrows, and exert myself to the utmost in alleviating them. That they may be speedily removed is the ardent prayer of my dear Mrs. *Mandeville's* sincere friend,

CAROLINE LAVINGTON.

LETTER XLII.

Mrs. MANDEVILLE to Mrs. LAVINGTON,
at Ely Grove.

Portland-Place.

AGREEABLE to your request, my dear Madam, I have attempted to answer your letter by return of post, though scarcely

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able

able to hold a pen, having been some days confined with a fever.

I am extremely sorry to hear of the misunderstanding that has lately taken place between the *Colonel* and you. When I was at Ely Grove, I thought it a Paradise, where love and innocence had voluntarily fixed their permanent abode, and totally excluded discord, and her infernal train. Be very cautious, my amiable friend how you suffer the pangs of jealousy to corrode your mind. Remember the observation of our immortal Bard :

*Trifles light as air are, to the jealous ,
Confirmations strong as proofs of Holy Writ.*

Mrs. T. though a woman of gaiety, would not, I dare say, give cause for serious apprehension to an amiable and affectionate wife—which is a character of such a sacred nature, that none but the most abandoned will cease to respect it. Be guarded against those insidious mortals, who under, the mask of friendship, report
every

every trifling occurrence that happens, and, by way of giving importance to their information, add to, and embellish it by, suggestions of their own.

But, admitting for a moment that your utmost fears are realized, and that the *Colonel's* infidelity is beyond a doubt ; yet remember that he is endowed by nature with a heart sensibly alive to honor, justice, and generosity ; and though the weakness of human nature may have seduced him into some temporary indiscretions, yet his own reflection will induce him, in a short time, to return to you with redoubled alacrity. Be careful then not to throw any impediment in the way of his return by a morose or reserved behaviour. In such a critical point, on which the happiness or misery of the residue of both your lives, perhaps, depends, too much circumspection cannot be exerted. Women, you know, my dear Madam, are called the weaker sex, gentleness is their proper weapon ; and an alluring smile will frequently secure that, from a

man of sensibility and honor, which a repulsive frown would for ever deprive her of.—

And now, my beloved friend, what apology can I make for my presumption in thus attempting to advise a mind so much better informed than my own. Nothing but the most fervent and sincere friendship, joined to the recent instance of confidence with which you have honoured me, could have induced me to it.

Adieu, most respected friend ; my fever is much increased by the agitation of my mind. That felicity may be once more transfused among the inhabitants of Ely-grove, is the sincere and earnest desire of,

Dear Madam,

Your obliged, but unhappy,

CLARA MANDEVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER XLIII.

COLONEL LAVINGTON to Mr. WILDING,
Isle of Man.

Ely Grove.

NEED I say, dear *Charles*, what pleasure it gives us to hear of your domestic happiness. We felt a void in our circle of friends after you and the sweet girls left us. Miss *Howe* kindly enclosed Miss *Bateman's* letter to Mrs. *Lavington*, who found much entertainment in the perusal of it. At present my *Caroline* appears unhappy, without any real cause. Some little time ago we had a large party at Ely-grove; and, among the rest, Mrs. *Travers*—you know what a lovely woman she is, *Wilding*. You and I differ in our sentiments concerning married women; you conceive them cold as Vestal virgins; I, on the contrary, conceive that under this apparent frost is oft concealed a lambent spark, which importunity and opportunity seldom fail, if properly applied, to fan into a flame.

We had a large party at the Grove the

other day, among whom was Mrs *Travers*, a woman whom it is utterly impossible to see and not adore; and, as *Captain T.* is not yet returned, inclination, as well as gallantry, led me to offer myself as her *Cicisbeo* for the day. I paid close attention to my charmer; and, a walk being proposed in the afternoon, we all strolled to the garden in small parties. But I ought to have told you, that just as we were sitting down to dinner, your friend *Sir Robert Stanley* arrived on his way to Bath. I find he is an acquaintance of *Captain Travers*, who is expected in England in a few weeks, his health not permitting him to continue abroad with his regiment. Whilst *Sir Robert* was entertaining Mrs. *L.* the gentle *Anna Brook*, and her worthy father, with your description of Mona, and domestic happiness, Mrs. *T.* and I took a turn on the terrace, to enjoy a delightful prospect that presents itself to view, her aunt excused herself from accompanying us. We sat down on one of the seats at the end of the terrace, which
you

you know is shaded by a fine oak tree. The gentle breeze heightened her complexion, and discomposed her hair, which gave new finishing to her beauty; when taking her hand, which is the loveliest nature ever formed, I kissed it; and, folding my arms round her, told her she was divinely fair—that my heart had long been sensible of her beauty—and then stole a kiss by surprise.—My fair one rose immediately, and chid me. “Go, Sir, (said she,) I will not listen to your tale—let us join the company.” “I have succeeded to my wish, my dear Madam, (replied I,) I had seen, and adored you, gay, serious, and tender, but never till now saw you angry; every thing becomes you, your smiles enchant me, your anger has a dignity in it that charms me.”—“Can you wonder, (added I, snatching another kiss,) that from a mouth so lovely, every thing should be adorable?”—She frowned—Then seizing her hand, I swore I would not leave her till she had pronounced my pardon. But what was my surprise on turning round, to see

Mrs. *Lavington* and *Anna Brook* in the orange grove, close to us; Mr. *Brook* and *Sir Robert* at some distance! I saw by my *Caroline's* countenance, how much she was hurt and offended.

We joined the rest of the company; and soon after sat down to cards. With a heart naturally inclined to virtue, is it not strange, my dear *Wilding*, I should have such repeated relapses? Yet I did not mean to disturb the happiness of my dear *Caroline*; who, by resenting this unmeaning gallantry, has made *Ely Grove* unpleasant.

I often, in viewing my regiment, took a little excursion round the neighbouring villas—through the world 'tis free to roam you know—I ought to give some cause for her suspicion—*Sir Robert* and I dined to-day with Mrs. *T.* and her aunt; Mrs. *Lavington* excused herself. *Stanley* pushed the bottle freely about, the fumes of which are still in my head, and will only permit me to add, I am, dear *Wilding*,

Sincerely your's,

R. LAVINGTON.

LETTER XLIV.

Mrs. MANDEVILLE to Mrs. NORMAN,
near Strebane, Ireland.

Portman-street.

AFTER experiencing a variety of the vicissitudes of fortune, I again take up my trembling pen, to assure my dear benefactress of the pleasure her last few lines gave to her unhappy *Clara*. How will your gentle heart feel for her when you have perused this letter! I have made every enquiry about those letters you mention, but cannot hear the least tidings of them, or by what means they were lost.

As I find the amiable Mrs. *Lavington* has acquainted you with the unfortunate circumstances of my dear Mr. *Mandeville's* death, I will date this little narrative from the period of my receiving a visit from his hated murderer.

Sometime after my *Horatio's* death, as I was sitting very melancholy in my room, perusing

sing one of *Pope's* works, to my great surprise Miss *Hervey* entered the room, supporting *Colonel Elwood*; who, leaning on her arm, with great respect approached me. At the sight of a man both reason and honour taught me to detest, my heart died within me.

“ I come, Madam, (said he,) to apologize for my improper behaviour at our last interview; and to condole with you on your unfortunate widowed state. Rest assured you have not a friend in the world that will be more ready to contribute to your happiness, and soften your sorrows;” and then offered to salute me. I pushed him from me with disdain, crying—“ Go, Sir, and enjoy that health and fortune *Providence* has given you, and leave the unhappy widow, of the ever-lamented *Mandeville*, to her sorrows. You have acted a base part in every sense of the word; you shall no more deceive me. What motive could induce you, Sir, to circulate a story that the generous *Walpole* had broken his first vows? Do you wish to heap
more

more evils on his once-esteemed *Clara*?"— and then rose to leave the room, my soul despising the idea of any further connexions with either of them. "It is well, Madam, (said he, with rising passion,) you are determined to make me your enemy, and you shall find me one." Miss *Hervey* then, pale and trembling, endeavoured to vindicate her conduct, by assuring me she supposed Mr. *Walpole* married from the time of Colonel *Elwood*'s arrival in England. "Oh, Madam, (said I,) you have woefully and irreparably deceived me! I reposed my heart on your honour, and have found its baseness. There is an end of all friendship between us. I wish you happy Miss *Hervey*; and that you may succeed in every laudable wish of your heart, whatever becomes of me." Perceiving she was on every side detected, and finding no hope was left from flattery or dissimulation, she concluded, that her best way would be to retire before all her perjury was discovered, or her hopes entirely crushed.

Whilst I remained ignorant of the ungenerous part she was acting, and all hopes debarred me of ever seeing Mr. *W.* again, she liberally assisted me with small sums of money whenever I was embarrassed for cash, which I repaid her; but, as that was no longer the case, the hatred inseparable to jealousy obviated every avenue to kindness: she therefore, departed without hinting again of pecuniary matters, and left me to sorrow and want. The agitations of my mind, and the vicissitudes of life I had lately experienced, brought on a relapse of my fever, and I languished on a sick bed in indigence and distress. The *Colonel* having sent his attorney to demand the money due to him from my husband, I sent my faithful *Susan* with my cloaths, and other valuables to raise what money she could on them; but it fell far short of his demands. Such unexpected calamities so struck my soul, that it wished to look out of the poignancy of its feelings to the recourse of friendship or benevolence; and

and dreadful is the situation of those that seek in vain.

Having often heard of the great humanity of Mrs. F. I addressed her in the language of distress, and found all her benevolence proceeded from ostentatious views. She heard of my sufferings with indifference; and my letter was returned to me with cold freezing silence; she considered a few shillings as thrown away in privately relieving the wants of a fellow-creature; incapable at that moment of assisting herself. Being in debt to my landlady for some months lodging, and, being by nature an unfeeling woman, I had little to hope from her indulgence or humanity: I then bent my feeble steps to the hospitable door of an old and valuable friend, and acquainted her with my unfortunate situation: but I found her amiable mind had been poisoned against me too, either by Miss *Hervey* or a favourite domestic, who I had reason to suspect was a secret enemy; at parting she presented me with a guinea, but not with that graceful sympathy

sympathy she was so accustomed to extend her generous friendship and benevolence. " There is bread for every person that will work, (said this once dear kind friend, as she presented me the guinea,) you should take in plain work; but you must draw and paint, and be a fine lady, and live on the public; be assured this is the last you will ever receive from me." Astonished and shocked at so different a reception from what I had been accustomed to from this highly esteemed friend, my heart bled at her reproofs, when a sudden gush of tears relieved my oppressed spirits. " Oh, spare me, dear Madam! (replied I,) I am very weak and culpable; but indeed I do every thing to merit your Ladyship's approbation, who was so good to me when I had no other friend—when the world seemed savagely set against me; but fate is not to be resisted." Mortification, my dear Mrs. *Norman*, is often more painful than real calamities. I returned home with a fixed resolution never to intrude again; or, if possible,

ble,

ble, let my sorrows or distress be known to any human creature, for I could not think of shocking your gentle sympathizing heart, with my wayward fate, and unhappy situation; or again intrude on the generosity and friendship of my kind friends in Shropshire, as I had no prospect of discharging the many obligations I already lay under.

As soon as I entered my apartment, Mrs. *Savage* accosted me: "Well, Madam, have you got the money to discharge my bill? (and added, with a glowing countenance,) I must have it to-night!" I gave her the guinea. "This is nothing! (said she, in a rage) I must have it all, or the consequence will not be pleasing to you to-morrow!" I assured her it was not in my power to discharge the debt immediately, but I would take an early opportunity—"Those excuses will not do, Madam, (said she,) I must be a friend to myself—the *Colonel* threatens to distress you." On seeing the tears streaming from my eyes—"Why do you not go in public? (continued she,) and

and not sit brooding over melancholy!"—"Melancholy may be shunned by the happy, Madam, (replied I,) but it will ever be the chosen companion of the wretched." She then left me in anger. As she was a stranger to the fine feelings of sympathy and humanity, I was extremely alarmed: I sat down with a bleeding heart, and wrote to you, my ever-dear friend, to my beloved sister, and *Louisa Howe*; and gave them to my faithful servant to be put in the post office the next day.

The faithful girl, who had attended me when I first left my native home, persisted in accompanying me in my sorrows. I frequently intreated her to get a better place, it being no longer in my power to support her. But the poor afflicted *Susan* replied, "I cannot think of leaving you, my honoured mistress, in the troubles and dangers you are involved in. Let me, by a dutiful attention, soften, if possible, your sorrows. I will support myself, (added this kind creature, with a flood of tears,) let me but stay

stay with you, Madam, till Heaven raises you a friend." But, alas! my dear Mrs. *Norman*, despair had now taken possession of my mind.

The evening being remarkably fine, I took my little dog, and bent my trembling steps to the green park; and sat down under the shade of a tree, till the night approached. Not all the luminaries that then surrounded me, if extinguished at once, would be half so sad as the benighted mind, that seeks for happiness, and meets despair. I remained some time in a state of lethargy; yet there were moments when I started as from a deep sleep. But oh! how deep a sleep was that of the soul!—My little dog barked—I hesitated and started at my shadow—All was calm as the mid-night hour, except my troubled mind—I saw not a gleam of hope to be rescued from my distress; and, dreading the malice of my enemies, and the frowns of my unfeeling landlady, despair seized my afflicted heart.—Oh,
what

what shall I do?—How extricate myself? sighed my weak soul.

As I approached the water, my faithful companion looked mournfully in my face, as if it shared my agony, and then set up a melancholy yell. I stood on the precipice, and brink of ruin, some time irresolute; my little dog pulled me by the gown, as if apprehensive of the rash and fatal step I was going to take. A beam of light struck on my benighted soul at that moment; when suddenly the noise of sighs and sadness roused me from despair, to feel for a fellow-creature. For a moment I stood still to listen—the sound came from the trees close to the hedge—I advanced towards the place, when I heard a sweet plaintive voice cry out, in a deranged manner, “Cruel—cruel—*Elwood*! you have murdered me!”—These words instantly reached my soul—When I arrived at the place, oh, my benefactress! what an interesting scene presented itself: On the ground sat an elegant figure, her cheek reclined on her hand,

hand, her elbow resting on the seat, and in her lap a young infant fast asleep. By the light of the moon I could discern she was young, and extremely pretty, though her countenance was pale and emaciated; her dishevelled hair hanging about her face, gave her an air of wildness and distress, that would have moved the most insensible heart. Again she called on the name of *Elwood*—I started at the name—and, past recollection, now painted this worthless man in the most despicable light. After remaining some time silent, she looked wildly round—I caught the babe, and endeavoured to sooth her—"Oh death! (said she,) thou cannot wound *Maria*!—It is only a pleasing journey—an easy passage to the blest mansion."—At that moment she sunk motionless on the ground—Oh, my dear friend! what a heart-piercing sight to your unhappy *Clara*! whose troubled mind started at every new scene of woe. She seemed to have experienced accumulated misfortunes, which had banished fair reason

reason from her throne—A kind breeze gently revived her—Recollecting I had a bottle of lavender drops in my pocket, and part of a biscuit, which, with difficulty her languid powers imbibed—her looks spoke unutterable thanks—With the tenderest glance of a fond mother doating on her child, she viewed her babe.—“ Heaven blefs you, kind lady, whoever you be! (cried she, in a faint voice,) for this charitable succour—My infant child and I have had no food to-day—Can you pity a wretch (continued she,) that has brought her *father's grey hairs with sorrow, I fear, to the grave?*—Credulity was my fault—a vile Platonic system my ruin Gracious God! (said she, clasping her hands,) let my sorrows, my unfeigned repentance, expiate my error—But oh, my father! would you but forgive me, and shield me from sin and want—but I must tell you my sad tale to implore your aid.—Lend me your arm, (continued she,) I am exceeding faint——Happily at that moment a shower of tears,
the

the offspring of returning reason, relieved her overwhelmed heart. Is not the midnight murderer, my dear Madam, white as snow to this vile seducer, this betrayer of unsuspecting innocence? Ought it not to be a double tie on the honour of men, to protect that woman who truly loves—gives up her will and places an unlimited confidence on his generosity?—and not let her honour be the sport of fools. And this sweet shrub, which had been blowing in the shade of retirement, under the fairest auspices, was doomed to be torn from the maternal tree—was fated to bloom even but a short time in the garden of luxury. Her seducer (I will not call him lover) very soon endeavoured to transplant her into the common ground, where all her charms would soon have fled. Deaf to the calls of humanity, and the cries of nature, he left this deluded creature in a lodging, without a friend to comfort or advise her: the trifle he left her was soon spent for necessaries. Shuddering at the idea of prostitution, she
and

reason from her throne—A kind breeze gently revived her—Recollecting I had a bottle of lavender drops in my pocket, and part of a biscuit, which, with difficulty her languid powers imbibed—her looks spoke unutterable thanks—With the tenderest glance of a fond mother doating on her child, she viewed her babe.—“ Heaven blefs you, kind lady, whoever you be ! (cried she, in a faint voice,) for this charitable succour—My infant child and I have had no food to-day—Can you pity a wretch (continued she,) that has brought her *father's grey hairs with sorrow, I fear, to the grave ?*—Credulity was my fault—a vile Platonic system my ruin Gracious God ! (said she, clasping her hands,) let my sorrows, my unfeigned repentance, expiate my error—But oh, my father ! would you but forgive me, and shield me from sin and want—but I must tell you my sad tale to implore your aid.—Lend me your arm, (continued she,) I am exceeding faint——Happily at that moment a shower of tears, the

the offspring of returning reason, relieved her overwhelmed heart. Is not the midnight murderer, my dear Madam, white as snow to this vile seducer, this betrayer of unsuspecting innocence? Ought it not to be a double tie on the honour of men, to protect that woman who truly loves—gives up her will and places an unlimited confidence on his generosity?—and not let her honour be the sport of fools. And this sweet shrub, which had been blowing in the shade of retirement, under the fairest auspices, was doomed to be torn from the maternal tree—was fated to bloom even but a short time in the garden of luxury. Her seducer (I will not call him lover) very soon endeavoured to transplant her into the common ground, where all her charms would soon have fled. Deaf to the calls of humanity, and the cries of nature, he left this deluded creature in a lodging, without a friend to comfort or advise her: the trifle he left her was soon spent for necessaries. Shuddering at the idea of prostitution, she
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and her infant had lived on what she could raise on her cloaths; and, that being spent, they were now almost starving. The woman, finding no prospect of being paid for her lodging, turned them out of doors. Unaccustomed to misery, and delicate by nature, she bent her feeble steps to the Park, in hopes to meet some charitable person who would save her infant, though she perished.

You see, my amiable friend, the Almighty Comforter took the wings of a dove, and, with a sweet transforming influence, brooded over the human heart, and snatched me from despair to comfort the poor mourner. My good Mrs. *Allworthy's* advice occurred to me—"Exult not, (said this dying faint,) my dear Miss *Lennox*, in the pride of your own virtue, nor triumph over the wretched fallen of your sex; but pour the balm of comfort in their bleeding hearts, should Providence throw them in your way." I will comfort the poor *Maria*; and write to her father, and endeavour to restore

restore to his paternal bosom the fair penitent.

I took her to a neighbouring house, carrying the infant in my arms, ordered her some refreshment, and passed my word for her lodging. I sent for my faithful *Susan*, who had, it seems, been miserable in my absence; but had softened my cruel landlady's disposition, by assuring her of my honour. I then returned to my apartments, and promised Mrs. *Savage* to settle with her in a day or two, which pacified her for the present.

As soon as I have her father's answer, I will write to you again, my beloved friend, and acquaint you with poor *Maria's* little narrative, which she has promised to indulge me with; the circumstances I have mentioned I drew from her at different times.

Oh, how grateful am I to the Almighty for snatching me from the brink of despair, and the horrors of a gloomy mind. I am impatient to hear from you: favour me
with

with one of your excellent letters; and advise my wayward mind, that knows not which way to direct its hopes.

I will write to the charming *Lady Angelina*, and refer my distressed situation to the feelings of her benevolent heart, which I hope will plead for my unhappy situation, and the poor suffering *Maria*. Oh that I could find an asylum within her hospitable doors! My deeply lamented benefactor raised my hopes, that time might produce in the lovely *Lady Angelina* a benefactress. I will offer myself as an humble friend or companion. I am impatient to leave a place where I have known so much distress. I am sorry to hear our dear friend at Ely Grove is not so happy as we could wish at present: the *Colonel* has the best of hearts, but the gaiety of his disposition has given pain to the amiable Mrs. *Lavington*. My desponding mind, and ill health, prevented my writing to him, agreeable to Miss *Howe's* request. I will attempt to mediate between them; perhaps he may excuse a liberty in
my

my unfortunate widowed state, that might be unpardonable any other time.

Adieu, my dear esteemed friend: may your health, peace, and happiness, be equal to your merits, prays

Your obliged,

CLARA MANDEVILLE.

LETTER XLV.

Mrs. MANDEVILLE to COLONEL
LAVINGTON, Shropshire.

SIR,

Portland Street.

GRATITUDE for many signal favours conferred on me by you and Mrs. *Lavington* when at Ely Grove, and a regard for your sacred happiness, have long since inspired my warmest wishes, both for your true dignity and real happiness; nor can I think of

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a more

a more endearing or effectual way of advancing one or the other, than by a speedy reconciliation with your amiable consort, who is truly unhappy at the unpleasant misunderstanding between you. The honor I had, Sir, of being admitted to your acquaintance and conversation, the pleasure I sometimes shared in Mrs. *L*'s. private hours of retirement, were a happiness sufficient of itself to require from me the utmost returns of gratitude; and which urge me to the liberty I now take to awaken sensibility; if I succeed I cannot offend your understanding.

See the sweet winning aspect of my young friend, that perpetually wears an attractive smile; see her elegant form, whilst the graces wait on her motion; see with what assiduity she attends her little nursery, early and late: but the roses fade, the lilies languish, and bright beauty drops her lustre in your absence. Oh, return then, my generous friend, that heart she prized as the most valuable jewel in her possession!

possession! Few gentlemen are better furnished either with benevolence of heart, richness of fancy, or copiousness of expression, to bear a shining part in conversation. With these amiable qualities and talents, and the winning incitements to virtue before you, you cannot surely, my dear Sir, refuse the olive-branch that is held forth to you at the Grove! See the sweet blossom presents you the picture of your venerable father! You, Sir, are particularly concerned in the amiable original. As indulgent Providence has made you heir to affluent circumstances, let not a gay thoughtlessness inadvertently lure you to vice! Follow the illustrious example of your father, tread in his steps, and you will give inexpressible joy to the best of mothers; and you cannot fail to be the darling of your friends.

You will, I fear, think my advice presumptuous and impertinent, but I hope you will excuse it with your usual goodness; and believe my only aim is to unite two hearts formed for love and happiness.

Nothing can give greater pleasure to your friends than to see you again happy in mutual bliss, with the amiable partner of your soul. In that sweet hope I will only add, that *Colonel Lavington* has not, among his numerous acquaintance, a more sincere or grateful friend than the sorrowful

CLARA MANDEVILLE.

LETTER XLVI.

LORD BELMONT to EDWARD BARRY-
MORE, Esq. in Switzerland.

Belmont House.

I RECEIVED your letter, dear *Barrymore*, last night, and sincerely rejoice with you in the happy prospect before you; assure Mrs. B. of my best wishes.

I must tell you of a little adventure I met with a few days ago. Riding through Hyde Park I observed the lovely *Lady Angelina*

gelina on horseback, close to Kensington Gardens; as she was endeavouring to dismount, her horse took fright, at the firing of a gun close to the hedge, and, suddenly rearing his head, threw his lovely burthen to the ground, before it was possible for her servant to prevent it. I flew on the wings of love to her assistance; supported her in my arms into the garden, and rested her on one of the seats, when she found she had sprained her ankle in the fall. Oh, *Ned*! at that moment my heart beat high to clasp the sweet widow to my panting bosom—but I feared to offend her delicacy. I sent my servant for her carriage immediately. “I thank you, my Lord, (said she, while a charming blush diffused over her countenance,) for your obliging attention; but my mother is in the garden; I see her coming;” (she continues to reside with *Lady Meanwell*, who sees her race renewed in the children of her son and daughter.) On approaching the spot where we sat, she seemed happy to see her

lovely daughter in no danger from the fright. On the arrival of the carriage I handed her in, and asked her permission to enquire after her health. She bowed her head—By a gentle pressure of her hand at parting I told her, how much my heart was interested in her.

The next morning I waited on her Ladyship, to enquire whether she had suffered by the fall. I found her engaged in forming the minds of her infant daughters, teaching their young ideas how to shoot—the wayward passions how to move.—I thought this a glorious opportunity to declare my passion for the amiable mother; and, as soon as the children retired, declared how necessary she was to my happiness; and offered a hand and heart long devoted to her charms. Oh, *Ned!* how like an angel did she look at that moment!—A lovely blush died her cheeks, and the modest virtues mingled in her eyes, while she thus replied—“ Our minds, my Lord, are not formed for so close a union: you
are

are gay and volatile, and have had no sorrow to damp your spirits; my temper has been soured by affliction—I have loved, and known the highest felicity—I have been deprived of it—and the extremest sorrow is now my portion.” Is it not shameful, *Barrymore*, for such a lovely woman to have understanding too?—Yet even this I could forgive, had she not that softness in her manner which steals upon the soul. Were she but vain, one would have some chance; but she is unconscious of her perfections.

Just then a servant presented a letter to the charming *Lady A.* which required an answer: after perusing it she said, “Your Lordship will, I hope, excuse my admitting the bearer of this.” I bowed. “Desire her to walk up,” said she. But what was my surprise to see the unfortunate widow *Mandeville* enter the room! She courtesied low; and apologized for the liberty she had taken, while a faint blush overspread her face at the sight of me. I bowed to her “Are you the person that wrote this
D 4 letter?”

letter?" said my agreeable companion. She, sighing, answered she was; and that her embarrassed situation had urged her to it. "Pray sit down, Madam, (said *Lady A.* whilst a sympathizing tear stole down her lovely cheek,) and, if it will not hurt your feelings, tell me how you came so distressed, and in such a place as London without friends. In a few words *Clara* gave her a short sketch of her present unfortunate situation. The extreme melancholy and dejection of her countenance, in which sickness and sorrow had made equal ravages; her emaciated form, and flowing tears, reached the heart of *Lady A.* who united in her looks compassion and astonishment, which gave new finishing to her beauty.

"Pray, Mrs. *Mandeville*, accept of this trifle; (said she, her eyes assuming a melting benignity,) and assure yourself, misfortune has not robbed you of all your friends. I wish it was in my power to offer you something more worthy of your acceptance.

I feel

I feel myself greatly interested for you. Call again in a few days; I will think of something for you."

I could scarce refrain from tears, dear *Ned*, at the charming, though distressing, scene; her deep weed, and supplicating attitude, intreating protection, softened my heart to womans' weakness. I hastily bowed, and left the room, to conceal my tears. But I will take an early opportunity to renew my addresses; till then believe me, dear *Barrymore*,

Sincerely your's,

BELMONT.

LETTER XLVII.

Mrs. MANDEVILLE to Mrs. NORMAN,
near Strebane, Ireland.

Portland Street.

I AGAIN take up my pen to acquaint my dear Mrs. *Norman* of my success with

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Lady

Lady Angelina Fielding, which has enabled me to be a friend to poor *Maria*. I arose early the next morning and wrote to her father.

Compelled by distress, and in the language of sorrow, I wrote to *Lady Angelina*, and waited on her myself with the letter. The servant looked on me with respect and compassion, which gave me some hopes. You may always judge, my dear Madam, by the servant's behaviour, of the humanity of their masters and mistresses. He took my letter up stairs; and returned desiring me to walk up. My knees trembled as I ascended; but my countenance brightened when I saw this lovely woman; but *Lord Belmont's* presence added to my confusion. On my entering the room, she arose from her seat, with a pleasing dignity. After hearing the heads of my unfortunate story, and my wishes to find an asylum in her house, she said—"What can I do for you, Mrs. *Mandeville*? I would give the world to make you happy, if I had it!"—"I had
flattered

flattered myself (said your trembling *Clara*) with the hope of being engaged in your family."—"My children are too young for a governess (replied she, with a gracious smile) but I will mention your unfortunate situation to a superior power; in the mean time pray accept of this trifle, (presenting a purse) which may serve to alleviate your present embarrassment."

A cheering gleam of hope now animated my heart, and enlightened my dreary prospects; and I retired from her presence, with a mind overflowing with gratitude to the Supreme Disposer of Events, for thus enabling me, through the bounty of this amiable lady, not only to alleviate my own distress, but administer consolation to the afflicted *Maria*, and her innocent offspring, to whom I hastened with the utmost speed, and provided with such necessaries as she stood in immediate want of. I then repaired to my lodgings, and soothed the obduracy of *Mrs. Savage*, by satisfying part of her demand.

I had just sent my grateful *Susan* for some necessaries, when I was summoned back to the unfortunate *Maria*, who had fainted soon after my departure. By the help of a little hartshorn and water she was soon recovered, and, when her perturbation had in some degree subsided, informed me, that *Colonel Elwood*, who she imagined had sailed for India, had passed her window in a coach. The sight of a man who had reduced her to her present disagreeable predicament, gave her a shock which the enfeebled state of her nerves could not sustain, and she became a prey to insensibility.

She then, bursting into tears, requested my advice with regard to her future conduct, provided her father should prove averse to a reconciliation; urging that, as she could no longer think of being an incumbrance on me, and had no cloaths proper to go into a family, even if an opportunity was to offer, she thought there could be no impropriety in applying to the *Colonel* for
that

that purpose, who perhaps might relent, and make some provision for the child.

To these observations I replied with some warmth, that, if she wished to render herself worthy my future notice, or the protection of the virtuous part of either sex, she must shun the base wretch whose deceptions had reduced her to her present situation; adding, that to apply to him was to open at once the flood-gates of destruction, which would overwhelm her beyond the reach of human redemption; and concluded by assuring her, that if she had the smallest reason to suppose the *Colonel* was apprised of her present situation, her only safety would consist in flight. Having convinced me that his passing the door was purely accidental, as far as concerned her, and that it was highly improbable that he was acquainted with her residence, I reminded her of the narrative which she had promised to indulge me with. She readily complied with my request, and proceeded in nearly the following words:

“I AM,

“I AM, Madam, the daughter of a respectable clergyman, some distance from London ; and, being an only child, in whom were centered the sole hopes of my parents, was treated with the utmost indulgence. Being a favorite with my father’s sister, a very amiable woman, who resided at some distance from our house, I frequently spent some weeks with her, where her son, who was about my own age, and I revelled in innocent sports, and a childish attachment was formed between us. This attachment was warmly encouraged by both our parents, who fondly anticipated the effects of a permanent union when we arrived at maturity ; but my affection was not of that nature ; my heart being at that time a stranger to the tender passion.

“One day as Mr. *Heartley* and I were out riding together, a pack of hounds suddenly crossed the road in pursuit of a hare ; my horse, being an old hunter, was roused at hearing the huntsman’s horn, and immediately joined the chase, leaving my cousin,
 who

who was not so well mounted, far behind, and almost petrified with horror on my account.

“ *Colonel Elwood*, who was following the hounds, saw my danger; and rode up close to my horse, which at that moment reared itself on its hind legs, and threw me with violence on the ground. I know not what passed for a few minutes, as I fainted through fright, and the pain occasioned by some slight contusions I received in the fall. When I revived I found myself in the *Colonel's* arms, with my coussing leaning over me, and wiping the blood, which flowed copiously from my nose.

“ We were but a short distance from my aunt's residence; to which the *Colonel*, seeing me unable to walk, carried me in his arms. My dear aunt, who was alarmed at the recital, returned the *Colonel* her most grateful acknowledgments for his humane exertions; to which he replied with an insinuating politeness, which he so well knows how to assume, and took his leave.—The
next

next day he called to enquire after my health—said a thousand fine things to me—swore he never loved till he saw me—and intreated my aunt's permission to renew his visits, as he was to reside for some time in the neighbourhood.

“ Our frequent interviews made Mr. *Heartzy* uneasy. He proposed my return to Godfrey-house ; but I did not treat his advice with my usual respect ; as about this time the *Colonel* began to make professions of love in a more explicit way. He swore that his happiness depended on my consenting to a private marriage, as he had great expectations on the will of an uncle, whose morose and penurious disposition would not, he was well assured, consent to our union. These professions, joined to his engaging figure, insinuating address, and pretended reverence for virtue, (for though he did not attempt to conceal the natural gaiety and volatility of his disposition, yet as he always restrained his behaviour, within the bounds of decorum, it only tended to make his company
more

more agreeable) had made a considerable progress in my affections before I was aware, and my inexperienced heart became a votary of the fickle deity without considering the consequences.

“My aunt acquainted my father with the conquest I had made; at the same time I wrote to him myself, acquainting him with the particulars, and assuring him that his approbation, and consent to our nuptials, would make me the happiest of women; and concluded by declaring my firm confidence in the truth of the old adage—*A reformed rake makes the best husband*—My father wrote to me immediately, and endeavoured to convince me by the most cogent arguments, of the impropriety of encouraging the *Colonel's* addresses.—‘I have often, my dear *Maria*, (said he) heard the giddy and thoughtless of your sex, make the same observation with regard to a reformed rake; but had flattered myself that your principles were too well-grounded in virtue and discretion to be deluded by such idle sophistry.

Vice,

Vice my dear girl, is of such a corrosive nature, that when once the mind is thoroughly contaminated by a long intercourse with it, it seldom quits its possession till the passions are destroyed by age, or quenched in the vortex of disease. Besides, what but the most egregious vanity can induce a woman to imagine that her charms can retain a heart, which is captivated by every fresh object it beholds? A rake, being accustomed to associate with none but the profligate and vicious part of the sex, conceives that all women are alike at bottom, that virtue is but a mere pretence, and has no notion of that refined and delicate modesty which is the surest safeguard of female chastity. Judge then, my dear *Maria*, if such a man is a proper character to conduct you through life; and of this description, I am well convinced, is *Colonel Elwood*. His excuse for a private marriage is a fabrication of his own, which should not be listened to for a moment, being intended to cover some insidious design which shocks my soul to think

think of. Renounce his acquaintance, then immediately ; return to Godfrey-house, and in my paternal arms lose the remembrance of a wretch whom the virtuous should avoid as a pestilence, and whose acquaintance would involve you in inevitable misery and destruction.'

" I will not tire you by a description of our parting interview, which was accompanied with tears on both sides, but briefly inform you that, though I complied with my father's directions in returning to Godfrey-house, I still kept up a secret correspondence with him ; till one day, as I was crossing the road, in the neighbourhood of my father's house, the *Colonel*, accompanied by a friend, alighted from a post-chaise ; and, after congratulating himself on his happiness in thus unexpectedly meeting me, he proceeded to inform me that the happiness of his life depended on my consenting to an immediate union. 'I can no longer live without you, my charming girl, (cried he) I have a Clergyman waiting at my friend's house, and

and a special licence, (which he produced) delay then no longer to render my blifs complete, but consent to be mine this very day.'

"These arguments, urged with the most persuasive and insinuating address, deluded my inexperienced mind, and caused me to forget those kind precautions which my father's superior sagacity had furnished me with; and in an unhappy moment I consented to depart with him. After the ceremony was performed, he informed me, that as all hopes of retrieving his circumstances depended on his uncle, it was indispenfibly necessary to keep our marriage a secret, even from my father; and concluding by reiterated assurances of honor and the most unalterable tenderness, conducted me to the carriage, without allowing me a moment to reflect on my conduct, or rally my scattered spirits.

For some months I continued happy, his affection appearing to encrease every day; though now and then an intervening thought
of

of the unhappiness and anxiety I had occasioned my father darted across my mind, and occasioned me many bitter reflexions. These he endeavoured to dissipate by assuring me he should soon have it in his power publicly to declare our marriage, when of course a re-union would take place with my father, and our mutual happiness admit of no increase.

“ He continued this respectful mode of behaviour till within these few days, when a letter was delivered to him written in a female hand, on the receipt of which he appeared much embarrassed, and from that time his affections visibly decreased. I again solicited him to acquaint my father with our marriage, when he started, paused, and, after some hesitation, informed me, with a look that chilled my heart, that I had no claim, as a wife, upon him ; but that, nevertheless, he would promote my interest to the utmost of his power ; adding that, as I was young and beautiful, he would recommend me to a friend of his, who had a predilection

dilection for me, and it would be my own fault if I did not make my fortune. He then informed me that his affairs called him abroad, and offered me his purse for my support, till he could realize his present promise.

“ But oh, Madam! (said the distressed *Maria*,) What pen can describe the horrors of my breast at this harangue? Surprise—guilt, (if it can be so called,) remorse, despair, and all the train of excruciating, heart-felt pangs, that harrow up the mind on its first deviation from virtue, now began powerfully to operate on my wounded heart. The starting tear, the rising sigh, and trembling frame, pleaded in vain my wretched situation; deaf to the claims of nature, or calls of honour and humanity, he hastily left the room. Thus stung to the soul, and penetrated with the most bitter distress, a fever ensued, which confined me some time to my bed; and my innocent babe caught the infection. The expences attending our illness was so great, that the trifle
this

this inhuman being left me, was soon spent. I sent my servant to raise money on my cloaths; and, after discharging the poor girl, having no longer the power to support her, I lived on the remainder of the money, while it lasted.

“ The person where I lodged, being a low, selfish woman, whose heart was a stranger to virtue or compassion, finding she had no prospect of being paid, introduced to me one morning, a gentleman of *Colonel Elwood's* acquaintance, whose base proposals I repelled with indignation. My landlady, incensed at my refusal of his generous offers, as she called them, ran into my room, and bitterly upbraided me for occupying her apartments without paying for them; and insisted on being paid that moment. With a trembling voice I assured her it was not in my power to pay her; that my infant and I had for several days wanted common necessaries. “ Then I am resolved you shall tramp this night with your brat; (cried she, in a rage,) I will look to the noble *Colonel* for

for the money. Come along, (continued she,) you shall not stay another hour in my house;" she then dragged me by the arm out of the room. I intreated her pity on a poor deluded girl, and the protection of her house another night; but pity was a stranger to her breast. I knew not where to go, having neither friends, money, or cloaths—I know not how my feeble frame got to the Park—I felt no pain in my body, all was in my head.—I sat down on the first seat I came to; my sick heart dying within me.

"But you, my guardian angel, (continued she, weeping,) saved my babe and I from perishing. What gratitude do I not owe to Heaven and you?—But I will not distress your feelings any longer, Madam, as I see by your countenance, the interest you take in my happiness."

Just then a messenger brought me word that a clergyman waited at my apartments to speak to me. "He seems to be in great trouble; (added my good *Susan*,) poor old gentleman, I left him in tears." The amiable

Maria at this intelligence fainted. I left her to the care of the mistress of the house, who was a very worthy woman, and hastened after the bearer.

On entering my parlour, I found the Reverend Mr. *Godfrey* almost drowned in tears: he had travelled all night. I informed him of his daughter's unhappy situation: but feared, from the agony in which he appeared, that I had been too hasty in the communication of my intelligence, and that it would prove fatal to him—I wished to recal my words—but could only use my best endeavours to alleviate the pain which they had occasioned.

“ Ah, my good Madam! (said he, taking his handkerchief from his eyes,) you have stung me to the quick! and at the same time acted the part of a friend, in rescuing my child. I thought her married, and in Scotland, by a letter I received some time ago. Ill-fated *Maria*!—Dear ruined girl whom didst thou deceive?—The sweet creature asked leave one day to amuse herself in

her favorite willow walk, and took *Thomson's* delightful *Seasons* in her hand as a companion. I seldom suffered her out of my sight; but my heart was not proof against her intreaties that day; and, being particularly engaged in writing, I suffered the blossom of beauty to encounter the danger of an early blight. Oh, *Maria*, thou art fallen a prey to a seducing hypocrite!—But thou art my child still.”

“ My dear Madam, (continued he,) since you have had the humanity to save my child from perishing, will you continue to be my friend, by assisting me to rescue her from his barbarous hands? She has been deluded, but not corrupted, I hope,” added he sobbing.

I could not conceal, my dear Mrs. *Norman*, the sensations which I felt; tears streamed down my cheeks: and, strongly moved by the emotions of humanity, as well as paternal affection, in his speech, I readily agreed to give them all the assistance in my power. I then took him to Miss *Godfrey's*

frey's lodgings. But oh, my dear friend, what a fresh scene of nature and sorrow was here displayed!—It was more than your poor *Clara* could well bear. My heart was already softened by an unhappy knowledge of distress and woe.

The poor *Maria* screamed when she saw her father, and sunk motionless in his arms, whilst soft pitying tears fell from his paternal eyes. By the help of a glass of water and hartshorn, she revived. Then bending her knees, she poured out her heart in humble acknowledgments to the *Almighty*, who had restored her to her father's arms.

How amiable is gratitude, especially when it has the Supreme Benefactor for its object! I have always looked on it, my dear Madam, as the most exalted principle that characterizes the heart.

“ Behold! oh my father! (said she,) Behold! a penitent daughter kneeling before you, imploring your forgiveness.” The parent sprang forward to make the afflicted mourner glad, and raised the trembling

penitent to his arms: then seeing her infant child took it, and clasping it to his heart, said—"Thou too shalt find a father, poor guiltless babe." "Oh, my dear father! (cried the grateful mother,) could angels be kinder!—Here nature and humanity took their part in the conduct of this worthy parent.

After enjoying a little refreshment, Mr. *Godfrey* ordered a post-chaise. He assured me of his warmest gratitude; whilst the agreeable *Maria*, with the tears stealing down her cheeks, told me, in a grateful manner, that my advice should be her future guide; that the friendship I had extended should never be erased from her heart.

She may yet live to be an example of virtue and piety, and an ornament to her neighbourhood. How many young creatures are led into inextricable errors by credulity, and the vile arts of men; yet possess every other virtue of the soul; and if snatched by parental tenderness in time, would be prevented from falling into the destruction we daily see.

I fear

I fear I have tired your patience with this tedious story, which has greatly affected the heart of my dear Mrs. *Norman's*

Affectionate and grateful

CLARA MANDEVILLE.

LETTER XLVIII.

Mr. WILDING to COLONEL LAVINGTON.

Isle of Man.

JUST as I received your letter, my dear Sir, I was setting off on a little tour round the Island; and, therefore, deferred answering it till my return. I was extremely sorry to hear that any thing had intervened to disturb the mutual happiness of my esteemed friends at Ely Grove; but I hope, my dear friend, a moment's reflection will convince you that there is no happiness, after all our wandering follies, equal to that we enjoy

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with an amiable wife, the agreeable companion of our bosom.

The roads from Douglas to Castle Town, and from thence to Peel Town, are equal to any near London; and though there are not many magnificent sights to dazzle the eye, yet there is every charm that nature can bestow. Rocks, vales, and mountains, gardens and rivers, scattered promiscuously in the most beautiful, though wild, variety imaginable.

The situation of Castle Town is delightfully romantic. A charming river runs through the town, over which is a noble bridge. When the tide flows a small vessel can sail under it with ease. Castle Town has been formerly the metropolis of the Island. The castle is a very fine and ancient building, and has been honored with several of the Lords of Man. At the entrance of the castle, there is a great stone chair, and two smaller ones for the Dempsters. Here they try all causes. When you pass this little court, you enter into a long winding passage

passage, between two high walls, not much unlike what is described of *Rosamond's Bower*, or *Labyrinth*, at Woodstock. Ten thousand men might be destroyed by a very few in attempting to enter. The extremity of it leads you to a room where the judges sit. The walls of the castle, which encompass it, are broad enough for three persons to walk a breast on, and are all made of free stone. Within the walls is a small tower adjoining to the castle, where, formerly, state prisoners were kept; it has a mote about it, and a draw bridge, and is a very strong place. The Lieutenant Governor resides in one part of the castle, which is commodious and spacious. There is also a very fine chapel, where divine service is celebrated in the morning and evening. Several officers belonging to the Court of Chancery, reside in Castle Town. The inhabitants appear extremely united.

My agreeable *Evelina* and Miss *Bateman*, were delighted with the pleasure they enjoyed at their assembly, which was brilliant.

Here we met again the charming Miss *Dear*, who was on a visit at the distance of a short mile from town; as her greatest pleasure is in obliging, she accompanied Mrs. *Wilding* to the north side of the Isle; the greatest friendship already subsists between them; and we parted from several families there with regret.

Our little cavalcade set off for Peel Town, to take a view of Peel Castle: the charming *Juliet*, *Captain Sullivan*, *Lydia*, and her swain, (who desires me to tell you he is over head and ears in love with her,) with our attendants, formed a large party; and, I believe, some of the poor peasants thought we were come to take possession of their town. As we advanced to the castle, we were handed into a little boat, and rowed, by two men, over that part of the sea that runs out by the castle walls when the tide flows. But, how agreeably were we surprised on getting out of the boat, to see two beautiful girls sitting on the rude battlements of the castle; one tuned her lute, and

and accompanied her sister, who warbled a few wild airs so melodiously as enchanted our senses. We stood some time in silent wonder, and found the words were composed and set to music by themselves, on a virgin, victim to the despotic rage of France, whose out stretched limbs were exposed to the agonizing rack, till the strained muscles crack'd, and from their sockets started the blood-red eyes—Before her stood, glutting his iron sight, the giant form of *M*——; on whose brow revenge kindled a savage smile, while even the face of the hard executioner relaxed, and sternly softened to a maiden's tears—The sweet maid, her eyes averting from the storied woe, knelt, and poured to Heaven her prayer—"All-just avenger of the innocent, be thou my champion!" the maid exclaimed. The mournful warblers melted into tender sounds their melancholy melodious voices, as they sung the last verse. Never, my dear *Colonel*, did the notes of music so animate and charm me, while tears of sym-

pathy stole down their lovely cheeks. They then, rose from their seats, and seeing us strangers, modestly offered their services to conduct us through the castle. These untutored children of nature displayed in their whole deportment a sweet simplicity, mixed with an amiable sensibility, seldom to be found in the circles of polite life.

Our lovely guides, accompanied by a venerable old man, conducted us through the castle, which stands on a large rock, separated from the town by an arm of the sea, which at some periods is deep enough for ships of forty tons to float in, though at others it is destitute of salt water, and supplied with fresh from a fine river, that runs between two neighbouring mountains.

Peel-castle, for its situation, antiquity, strength, and beauty, might justly be stiled one of the wonders of the world, art and nature having appeared to vie with each other in its formation. It is built on a huge rock, which rears itself a stupendous height above the sea, by which it is surrounded,
and

and is fortified by several of less magnitude.

We ascended about three-score stone steps, cut out of the first wall, which is immensely high and strong, and built of very bright stone. It has on it four little watch-towers, over-looking the sea. The gates are most curiously arched, and adorned with pilasters. The grand wall, as well as the others, are full of port-holes for the use of cannon.

On entering the gate we found ourselves in an extensive plain, in the centre of which stands the castle, encompassed by four churches, which time has so much deranged, that little else beside the walls and a few tombs remain; there is however, a chapel, which is kept in better repair.

The rooms and vaults under the castle impress the spectators with awe, and are the most dreadful places that imagination can form. The sea runs under it through cavities formed in the rocks, with such a tremendous, hollow noise, that it caused a universal tre-

pidation throughout the whole frame of the gentle *Evelina*.

The magnificence of the chapel, the elegance of the tombs, and the ruins of several other superb buildings, plainly evince, that the sciences of architecture and sculpture formerly flourished in an eminent degree in this island.

The antique appearance of this immense structure—the loftiness of the cieling—the dim light that perforated the Gothic arched windows, and gave every object a grave and venerable appearance—impressed a pleasing melancholy—a kind of religious awe—on every beholder ; but when we arrived in the inner apartments, which are veiled in total obscurity, Mrs. *W.* seemed anxious to depart.

Our ancient conductor entertained us with a very laughable story, as we came out, which had descended by tradition through many generations, that this castle was first inhabited by fairies, and afterwards by giants, who continued in the possession
of

of it till the days of *Merlin* ; who, by the force of magic, dislodged the greatest part of them, and bound the rest in spells ; and that they were not extirpated till the reign of *Prince Arthur*.

This good old man informed us that the island afterwards became an asylum to all the distressed princes and great men in Europe ; and that the extensive fortifications about Peel-castle, were intended for their greater security. So that you see, Sir, to what an extent credulity and superstition formerly here predominated.

The two sweet girls conducted us to a pleasing retreat, where we were accommodated with refreshments in a stile of simple elegance, and a view of Ballamoore, the seat of the late *Sir George Moor*, which, as a rural summer residence, stands unrivalled. We then viewed Peel-town, which is small but neat, and the surrounding country extremely romantic. Here we took leave of our pretty rustics, not without some regret. The road from Peel-town to
 Ramfay,

Ramfay, as well as several other districts in this island, strongly resemble some parts of America. So many delightful prospects clustered on our view that our attention was absorbed in admiration and surprize.

At length we reached a row of stately and venerable trees, leading to the Bishop's palace, which is a stately edifice, and commands, from one part, a picturesque view of great extent and beauty. Its lofty walls are richly cloathed with the choicest fruit-trees, in their most luxuriant state ; while a grotto, cascade, and beautiful flower-garden, surrounded by an extensive mote, which, while it renders the breezes cool and refreshing, adds to the beauty of the enchanting scene ; there is likewise a beautiful pavillion, with a small lawn fringed with plantations. Here we spent a most delightful hour, in all the sweets of rural innocence which such a delightful situation could inspire, and departed with the utmost regret.

The land from Bishop's-court to Ramfay appears cultivated with uncommon care.

Lydia

Lydia was shocked to see the little rustics run about our horses, bare-footed, despising the incumbrance of shoes and stockings. She threw them some silver, for which they returned their thanks in a manner dictated by the genuine precepts of nature. These children, whose first appearance excited the keenest sensation of pity, seemed to enjoy the pleasure of paddling in the streams and running on the grass, in a manner superior to any that could arise from the gayest ornaments ; particularly as the custom has so hardened their feet, as to render them impervious to gravel and other hard substances.

I am entirely of Mr. *Bateman's* opinion, that the north part of this isle affords more delightful and extensive prospects than the south. The views of sloping fields, overspread with various wild blossoms, whose vivid colours are relieved by the variegated verdure of the corn, affords the most delightful sensation to a contemplative observer.

At

At night we arrived in town, and went to a ball, at which I was introduced to several very charming women, but they were married, my dear *Colonel*, and married women are, in my opinion, you know, forbidden fruit. My dear *Evelina* expressed the greatest pleasure in the polite attention which has been shewn her by several ladies and families here, whose agreeable conversation, and genteel demeanor, seem to render their acquaintance well worthy our attention. The complexions of the ladies are remarkably clear and ruddy, which is ascribed, principally, to the salubrity of the sea-air, so that they have no need to have recourse to paints and washes, the deleterious effects of which are too often fatally experienced by the female inhabitants of cities and large towns.

They have an excellent market in this place, and the supply of butcher's meat is abundant; and the meat, though small, is remarkably fine flavoured; they have also an immense quantity of the finest fish in the world,

world, which, I imagine tends to render them so extremely prolific ; as I never beheld a place of its size, in which so many children presented themselves in every direction ; and I am told by a native that there are instances of people having twenty. He complained very much of the difficulty and expence which parents, among the labouring class, sustained in the article of education, as there are no free-schools established here ; and was apprehensive that ignorance and superstition would in consequence re-assume their original ascendancy. Oh, my dear *Colonel*, what a wide field is here for the exertions of philanthropy ! Surely, if our great men, who consume their immense fortunes in scenes of dissipation, and nocturnal debaucheries, could for once be brought to taste the sweet sensations arising from works of charity—could they witness the tender parent's anxiety for the future fate of its helpless offspring—watching its expanding mind, yet unable, from its multifarious concerns, itself to engage, and equally

ly unable, from its contracted circumstances, to procure others, in the

“ *Delightful task—to rear the tender mind,*

“ *And teach its young ideas how to shoot ;*”

Could they view, on the other hand, the grateful ideas springing in the youthful heart, emancipated from the shackles of ignorance—fortified against the seductions of vice—and taught to become a useful member of that community to which he might otherwise have proved an incumbrance—Could, I say, our great men be brought duly to reflect on these things, how would the charms of the bottle fade, the allurements of prostitutes, and the attractions of the gaming-table lose their fascinating effects! I declare to you, my dear friend, that nothing would afford me more sincere pleasure than to see seminaries of this kind instituted in this sequestered isle, to the expences of which I would chearfully contribute to the utmost extent of my scanty finances.

Ramsay

Ramfay is of a triangular form, one side of which is washed by the sea, near which it receives a charming river, running in two streams, having handsome bridges over them. It keeps up a regular communication with Liverpool and Whitehaven, having several boats, fitted up with good accommodations for passengers, which sail weekly. There are likewise several sloops and hoys which may be engaged for the same purpose.—The passage from Liverpool is frequently made in twelve hours, and from Whitehaven in four. I shall conclude my description of this place by informing you that it is not only delightfully, but usefully situated for the service of commerce, as it affords comfort and convenience to mariners in their passage through the bay. At quitting the town, we parted reluctantly from a numerous circle of the inhabitants, who had treated us with the utmost politeness and hospitality. The amiable *Juliet* has promised *Evelina* to spend part of the winter with us.

A letter from Miss *Howe* to *Lydia* has
damped

damped our joy, and kindled the strongest emotions of sympathy and regret in all our bosoms. Poor suffering *Clara*, what a shocking fate is thine! Amiable, unfortunate widow, had we earlier known thy distressed situation, earlier would we have endeavoured to alleviate them. I must endeavour to hit on some scheme for her relief, in which I am sure I shall be assisted to the utmost by my dear *Evelina*, and her amiable sister. In the interim I remain, my dear *Colonel's*

Sincere friend,

CHARLES WILDING.

LETTER XLIX.

Mrs. BARRYMORE to Mrs. NORMAN,
near Strebane, Ireland.

Switzerland.

HOW sweetly does my dear friend display her sympathy and friendship for the unhappy

happy *Clara*, whose forlorn and distressed situation I most sincerely lament; but when I came to that part of her story wherein the horrors of her mind is described at the time of her meeting with the injured *Maria*, my heart died within me, and I fell from my chair. Mr. *B.* caught me in his arms, and, by the help of salts, I soon revived. When he read your letter, a tear stole down his manly cheek, and he expressed his sorrows in the most unequivocal manner for her disconsolate state. We shall be in England in a few months, and if she is not otherwise engaged at that time, she shall find a secure asylum in our house. Assure her of my unabated friendship, and sincere sympathy in her misfortunes.

We met with several English families here, a circumstance which proved very pleasing, and rendered our residence more agreeable. The air is intensely cold in winter, from the vast quantity of snow which covers the mountains, and the frozen rivers and lakes. The soil is fruitful, but very unequal; for the
inhabitants

inhabitants who reside on one side of the mountains are often reaping while those on the opposite side are sowing their grain. The rivers are remarkably fine, particularly the Rhine, the Rhone, and Rofs; the lakes are most romantically situated; those of Geneva and Constance in particular. Formerly, I am told, their traffic was trifling; but of late years they have exported large quantities of linen, lace, stockings, velvets, silks, and stuffs.

Among the natural curiosities to be found here, are some pieces of the purest crystal, mercasets, and other stones. Here are some surprizing hermitages, particularly one about two leagues from Fribourg, which an hermit spent twenty-five years in forming, without receiving the least assistance. It contains a chapel, a parlour twenty-eight paces in length, twelve in breadth, and twenty feet in height; a cabinet, a kitchen, and cellar, all out of the same rock, to the summit of which he carried his chimnies, though an amazing height from his rooms.

With

With inexpressible labor he levelled the side of the rock, brought earth from the neighbouring parts, and formed a delightful garden. That nothing might be wanting to render his retreat perfect, this industrious hermit, observing drops of water distil from several parts of the rock, sufficient to water his garden, and allay his thirst, followed it in its course, and dug out a reservoir, by which he obtained a sufficient quantity for every purpose.

Literature here makes no great figure, though Geneva boasts one of its greatest modern ornaments, the immortal *J. J. Rousseau*.

I have just received cards of invitation to a ball, and as it is time to begin the necessary preparations, I shall conclude by assuring you that I remain,

Sincerely your's,

LAURA BARRYMORE.

LETTER

LETTER L.

Miss HOWE to Mrs. MANDEVILLE.

Ely Grove.

WHY, my dear *Clara*, did you conceal your piercing distress, and anguish of mind from your *Louisa*? Could you doubt the sincerity of my friendship, or the generosity of my heart? Oh how I grieved for your unfortunate situation, when I perused your affecting letter to Mrs. *Norman*, which she enclosed to my Sister *Lavington*, who wept bitterly over it; the *Colonel's* eyes likewise glistened with tears while listening to it.—I have the pleasure to tell you, my sweet friend, that your kind mediation between them has had the desired effect. He raved at first at the contents of your letter, and seemed irritated at what he was pleased to call an impertinent interference; but a moment's reflection convinced him it proceeded from a heart devoted to them both, and solicitous for their happiness.

My

My sister, after receiving your letter, followed a very different plan, and charmed him in such a manner by her domestic proceedings, and pliant obliging carriage, that he caught her to his bosom, and kissed her in the most affectionate manner. “No man, said he,) can be unhappy with a woman of your pleasant temper.” She studies his taste and disposition with exactness, and makes it a point to conform to them in every respect, so that not an hour passes away stupidly or unpleasantly. As she had never loved any man but him, she is naturally prompted to make him happy, and he is become quite enchanted with her. I assure you, my dear *Clara*, if he had been my husband, and had left me so abruptly, I should have reconciled myself to reciprocal indifference, and displayed a little female philosophy among my friends in public, at the expence of my own peace in private. I would not wish to act the hypocrite, but there is a secret satisfaction in seeming indifferent when we are slighted;

which is but retaliation. But the prudent *Caroline* has now, by her confidence in his honour and affection, brought him to love her more than ever.

As he rode out this morning, he gaily said, with an enchanting smile—"Make yourself happy, my beloved *Caroline*, in my absence; assure yourself, whoever has the casket, you alone are in possession of the jewel it contains." Then saluting her with great tenderness, and the babe, pranced away, while his fine horse reared its head, as if proud of its happy owner. You know, my dear friend, what an elegant figure he is on horseback. If he was not married to my sister, I should certainly carry on a flirtation with him in my little *Captain's* absence.

I begin to have a better opinion of Mrs. *Travers*; it certainly was prudent in her retire to from Ely Grove: he assured us of her innocence, and that she possesses the most benevolent and feeling mind. You know,

know, my dear *Clara*, what a noble, generous heart he has, in protecting the character of women, particularly those that have suffered by scandal on his account. If all the men would follow his example in this point, there would not be so many of our sex suffer in the opinion of the world.

Captain Travers is hourly expected in England; his bad state of health obliges him to leave his regiment, the physicians having recommended the Bath waters to him.

I have had an affectionate letter from my brave *Captain*. I have been planting laurels for the loyal warrior, and I hope he will bring the olive-branch. He extends his best wishes to my dear *Clara*, for a happier fate than she has hitherto enjoyed.

My sister *L.* has received a letter from your amiable friend at Strebane; she promises to visit Ely Grove next year. I shall see her approach with the greatest delight, as I hope it will bring my dear Mrs. *Man-*

deville to the Grove, a circumstance which will give the highest pleasure to

Her affectionate

LOUISA HOWE.

LETTER LI.

Mrs. NORMAN to Mrs. MANDEVILLE.

Strebane.

YOUR last letter, my dear Mrs. *Mandeville*, greatly affected and astonished me; I have wept over the sorrows and dangers your cruel fate involved you in, and poor *Maria's* story. You see that present calamity, be it ever so bitter, and hard to be borne, leads, in some shape or other, to succeeding good—You have been the peculiar care of Heaven—Behold the providential love of that being, whose blessings you are so sensible of!—that snatched you
from

from despair, and enabled you to administer consolation and relief to the poor afflicted penitent—to soften her woes—and to unite again parental love and filial duty. How must your heart exult, my dear *Clara*, in the pleasing reflection of having saved from destruction, perhaps from death, an uncorrupted mind! Oh, may her future conduct be such as to merit your friendship! What must *Colonel Elwood's* feelings be, when he comes to reflect on the ruin and misery he has involved an innocent and respectable family in, who, I think, I have some knowledge of, and is far superior to his own.

I have received a letter from our friend *Mrs. Barrymore*; she mentions you with great esteem.

My unhappy brother's family are an additional expence to me, and prevents me from extending that generous friendship my heart could wish; but permit me to present you with the enclosed trifle; that it were in my power to offer something more wor-

thy the acceptance of my dear suffering
Clara, is the ardent wish of her

Sincere Friend,

ARABELLA NORMAN.

LETTER LII.

MISS HERVEY TO COLONEL ELWOOD,
in Poland Street.

Sloane Street.

HOW disappointed, my dear *Colonel*,
was I yesterday, when I waited at home
expecting you, agreeable to your promise.
I called on Mrs. *Mandeville* in the morning,
having fixed my plan of proceeding. She
was leaning on her favourite *Susan's* arm
when I entered her room; the change
which I saw in her countenance struck me;
the graces which used to inhabit there were
fled, and the hand of death seemed on her
face;

face; a relapse of her fever had enfeebled her limbs. On my approach she changed colour, and her voice faltered; I found I was an unwelcome guest. My head was full of schemes, and my heart palpitated with the fear of their detection. I informed her of your intended visit before you left town; and advised her to a reconciliation with you. "For you know, my dear Mrs. *Mandeville*, (said I,) how much it is in the *Colonel's* power to distress you; in your indigent circumstances what could you do? He esteems you, and will protect and take you out of all your difficulties, if it is not your own fault." Assuming all her native dignity, she replied—"I will be the guardian of my own honour, Madam, and want not so insolent and dangerous a monitor." She then, with a majestic air, retired to her chamber.

Ah, how I hate her!—*Walpole* is expected in a few months in town—Should she yet be his—I die at the very thought—all my plots and schemes will then be found out,

and your *Harriet* undone.—His last letter was more tender than usual. I have wrote to him since, but have not received an answer. A guilty mind is ever alarmed at trifles. Could I call the elegant *Henry* mine, I would give up all the world besides, if I possessed it. Aid and assist me in it, dear *Colonel*; visit the widow again, her heart is softened now by distress; she may relent, and forgive what is past; win her gratitude, and hasten to

Your sincere friend,

HARRIET HERVEY.

LETTER LIII.

MISS GODFREY TO MRS. MANDEVILLE.

Godfrey House, Cheshire.

THE compassionate nature, Madam, of which you have given me such noble proofs, assures me I need not, if I could, paint to you the grief that past recollection overwhelms

whelms me in; at the misfortunes credulity, and the most innocent esteem, involved me in: a fervent confidence in the honour of the destroyer of my peace, drew me in the snares that were laid for my unguarded youth. Here let me draw a veil, and persuade myself to profit by the advice and humanity you was so evidently disposed to exert in my favour, which intitles you to every claim on my gratitude, which can never cease but with life.

Your obliging request to know how the dear infant, and its unfortunate mother, bore the fatigue of the journey, urges me to trouble you with this address. Soothed by paternal affection, a sweet, yet sad pleasure wandered through my exhausted frame, and dismissed the dreary prospects my soul had wept over. A thousand little tenderesses rose on my mind, reviving those dear scenes of infant happiness. But, when the voice of melody and sweetness re-assured me of protection, filial love diffused the offerings of a grateful heart into his paternal

bosom.—We bent in grateful thanks to the indulgent power, and prayed him to reward you for your timely aid. My dear *Frederick* smiles his thanks, he hourly improves in the affection of his aged parent.

The weather being remarkably fine, I walked out this morning with my little cherub to enjoy the pleasant air; when suddenly I heard the trampling of horses, and, fearing the narrowness of the passage, I was turning hastily back, when I heard a voice call out, “Pray, Madam, do not be frightened—give me leave to assist you.” Oh, what various emotions took possession of my soul, when I knew it to be the voice of *Colonel Elwood*! who immediately approached me. Alarmed at my situation, and the recollection of the miseries I had endured, my heart sunk within me. At the sight of an object that was once dear to me, but now become hateful, I fell motionless to the ground. On reviving I endeavoured to take my innocent babe, (who his friend
 was

was careffing,) and to escape; but the gay *Lothario*, who left me to perish with his infant fon, when the tearful eye, and the bleeding heart, pleaded once in vain, prevented me.

“ Hear me, my dear *Maria*! (faid this vile feducer,) I have your happinefs at heart, notwithstanding my paffion for variety.”—“ Indeed, Sir, (replied I, refolutely) you muft change your ftile—I will not hear you—You can no more deceive, nor I be ruined—Had you my happinefs at heart, you would ere now have fixed me your’s by honourable ties.” “ *Curfe on all ties but thofe that love has made*, (faid this bafe man,) by thofe I am already your’s—and I fwear, by your fweet felf, that it fhall be the ftudy of my life to make you happy—Fly then, my charmer, this moment with me—a neighbouring clergyman fhall unite us to-morrow morning.”—“ Hold, Sir! (cried I,) ftill making ufe of my utmoft ftrength to difengage myfelf from his arms,) Already I have been deceived by a falfe
F 6 marriage.

marriage—My love, powerful as it was then, has not triumphed over my reason. I insist on your leaving me this instant—I have now no other wish but never to behold you more—Why must I be thus pursued by you?—Have you not made me miserable enough already?—The consequence would be fatal should my father see you;” and, giving a sudden spring, forced myself from his arms, and flew to my child, who was under the care of the *Colonel's* friend, and made the best of my way from this base man.

On observing my reverend parent crossing the field, I bent my trembling steps towards him, and, when I came to him, sunk motionless in his arms. I found that on seeing him they mounted their horses, and rode off.

Alarmed at this intrusion, and urged by paternal care, I shall leave Godfrey-house to-morrow; and visit a dear loved friend in Shropshire, who is deeply interested in the sorrows of the unhappy *Maria*; in her faithful bosom I can pour out all my grief; her
prudence

prudence and exalted friendship will direct and console me ; and in her delightful society shall I lose the remembrance of my past misery. Accept, Madam, my grateful acknowledgment of the inexpressible obligations I have received at your hands, and believe me to be,

Your affectionate,

MARIA GODFREY.

LETTER LIV.

COLONEL ELWOOD to Mr. MEDLEY,
Bond-street.

Shropshire.

AFTER parting with you, dear *James*, at the inn, I sent my servant *Derby*, with a penitential letter to *Maria*. I must have her again, and on my own terms too, though I have, at times, some compunction for the distress I have occasioned her. How lovely she looked that day !—my boy too—I thought
I perceived

I perceived in him a faint resemblance of his unkind father.—I cannot think of marrying, *Medley*, my soul starts at the name of husband.

My servant returned soon after, and informed me that *Maria* had quitted Godfrey-house, and nobody could tell where she was gone. I immediately began to curse and damn the fellow with the utmost fury.—“ I thought your Honour would be after being a little enraged (said *Derby*) at my bringing you such bad news. Some suspect my old mistress is gone to be married to her cousin, who threatens to shoot your Honour, if ever he should see you in his neighbourhood again.”

The simple fellow provoked me with this recital, though his intentions were good.—I immediately sent him back again, and ordered him not to see my face till he had discovered to what part of the country *Maria* had retired. A few days after I received the following letter :

“ To

“ TO COLONEL ELWOOD.

“ HONOURED SIR,

“ I HAVE had a terrible jaunt after my old mistress ; and at length have discovered, by means of an old comrade, that she and little master are gone into Shropshire. I would have told your Honour sooner, but my old comrade would make me stop at his wedding ; and I thought your Honour would be after having a little patience, as I had found Miss out. A merrier wedding I never was at in my life, for we danced, sang, and drank, till the bride and bridegroom could scarcely see their way to bed ; and better whiskey I never drank, even in my own country. But your Honour may expect to see me to-morrow, before your Honour is awake ; and I will bring my comrade with me.

“ So no more, from your Honour’s faithful servant till death,

“ DERBY O’FLAHARTY.”

The

The night after I received this curious epistle, having just retired to rest, *Derby* approached my bedside—"I hope your Honour will not be angry with me, (said he) for waking your Honour before you was asleep, as I could not rest till I had brought you such good news; for my comrade says Miss is gone to live with her aunt, at a pretty house, covered with trees, near the river Severn."—"What is your friend? (asked I, quite out of patience).—"He is a sea-officer," answered *Derby*)—"A sea-officer!"—"Yes, your Honour, (said he) he is gunner of a merchant-man."—"Well, then, here is a guinea for him to drink my health, and success to the British flag." Scarce could I restrain the efforts of my risible muscles, notwithstanding my impatience, at the consequence *Derby* assumed, while describing his friend's situation in life.

I then ordered him to have a post-chaise ready early in the morning, when I set off for Shropshire; and, though I have been
here

here above a week, I have not yet discovered her retreat.

But the charming Mrs. *Travers* engrosses all my thoughts at present. Stopping at an inn on the road to change horses, I observed *Sir Robert Stanley*, and *Captain Travers* and his lovely wife get out of a carriage; as I had a slight acquaintance with *Sir Robert*, I soon introduced myself, and travelled some distance with them, and at parting received a polite invitation to spend a day with them at *Sherwood-house*, which I readily accepted.

And now, *Medley*, I am perfectly enraptured with Mrs. *Travers*!—She is extremely handsome—You know, *James*, how much I admire fine eyes—and her's are the most expressive I ever saw; and her mouth and smiles enchanting! I have some reason to think she has already conceived a favourable opinion of your friend—you may be certain I will render this predilection subservient to my views; and I have scarcely ever encountered a woman yet, whose virtue I have not overcome.

Sir

Sir Robert and this envied husband, who, I think, appears rather inclined to jealousy, were to set off for Ely-grove this morning; I will take that opportunity to call at Sherwood-house, and, in his absence, endeavour to gain her confidence, and if possible, her heart. Adieu, dear *Medley*, my horses are at the door, and I am all impatience; I shall only add, that I remain,

Your sincere friend,

ELWOOD.

LETTER LV.

Mrs. MANDEVILLE to Miss HOWE,
at Ely Grove.

WHAT language can describe, my dear *Louisa*, the pleasure I received in perusing your last letter, wherein you inform me of the happy reconciliation of our dear friends at Ely-grove! Oh may no dark cloud obscure

secure the bright sun-shine of their future felicity, but may every day produce its renewed portion of bliss.

*May life's pure joys each day encrease,
Till angels waft them to the realms of peace.*

And now, according to your request, I shall proceed to give you some relation of my own proceedings :—Having discharged the faithful *Susan*, for whom I was fortunate enough to procure a situation, I obtained employment in painting and embroidering. My mind, thus occupied in its favourite exercise, became gradually tranquillized and serene, my health was nearly restored, I became resigned to my dependent state, and began again to flatter myself with a prospect of happiness : when, returning one evening from Chelsea, where I had been to carry home an embroidered screen, in passing the end of Grosvenor-place, I was accosted by two footpads, who presented pistols and demanded my money ; I immediately surrendered the trifle I had about me, but, not
satisfied

satisfied therewith, they rifled me of my cloak and bonnet, and, after pushing me from them with great violence, fled precipitately across the fields.

Overcome with fright, my spirits sunk within me, and uttering a faint scream I fell motionless to the earth. At that moment a post-chaise and four came by, and a gentleman who was in it, hearing a scream, and seeing a woman prostrate on the earth, ordered the drivers to stop, and descended to my assistance. But, my dear *Louisa*, judge of my emotions, when I discovered my deliverer to be my much-respected friend Mr. *Goodall*. The united sensations of joy, gratitude and surprize at once assailed my weak spirits, and it was with the utmost difficulty I was kept from fainting.

Mr. *Goodall* approached me with astonishment, and, with a voice softened by sweet humanity, soothed my troubled mind; and, raising me in his arms, placed me in his carriage, and ordered the chaise to be drove slowly to my lodgings. Impatient to know
how

how I came to be in so dangerous a situation, and observing me in weeds, exclaimed, with an involuntary sigh—"Poor dear unfortunate *Clara*, how hard and strange is thy fate! Oh, why, my dear Madam, (continued he,) did you suffer yourself to be hurried into so precipitate a marriage?—But I will not probe your wounds, nor distress your feelings. Pray compose yourself, and tell me candidly how you are situated in regard to pecuniary matters." I then, with the utmost candour, related my melancholy tale, which drew a tear from his manly countenance, and almost suffocated him with sighs, at the recollection of the evils and sorrows I had endured. "Permit me to be your banker for the present, dear Madam; (said he, with a gracious smile, presenting me with a note,) and assure yourself, the giver has much more pleasure than the receive; and think that the greatest person in the world, is a good person struggling with adversity." "Ah, my valuable friend! (replied your grateful *Clara*,) there

is

is still a greater, which is the good man that comes to relieve her!

After ordering me some refreshment, with the soft voice of friendship, he retired, wishing me a good night's rest.

And now, my friend, a dawn of hope again revives my drooping spirits. I will immediately discharge the obligation my poor lamented *Horatio* was under to the base *Colonel Elwood*.

The generous and benevolent *Goodall*, had been some time in Scotland, and knew not the sorrows your poor *Clara* had experienced. But the hour is late, sleep overpowers my senses, so good night, my dear loved friend. That angels may guard you from every danger, prays your affectionate and

Grateful Friend,

CLARA MANDEVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER LVI.

Mr. BATEMAN to CAPT. PARKER,
at Portsmouth.

Ramsay Bay.

AGAIN, my dear *Parker*, fate, and the chance of war, has drove me into this delightful bay. I ordered the barge, and hastened on shore to see my amiable *Juliet*; and, if disengaged, to offer her a hand and heart long devoted to her charms. But oh, my friend, what a scene presented itself to my view!—What pen can describe the horrors of my mind, when, on enquiring for Miss *Dear*, the servant informed me, with a tearful eye, that her young mistress was happy! From the agony of the poor girl's grief when she saw me, my foreboding heart dreaded to hear more. But walking into the parlour, and throwing myself on the sofa, I gave way to the anguish of my mind.

Her sorrowful servant informed me, that she had been suddenly confined to her bed
with

with a cold, which rapidly turned to a violent fever, and in a short time, made this charming girl a corpse. The canker of grief had preyed on her damask cheeks; she had pined in secret, and had been the silent victim of despair. The doctor did all in his power to stop the progress of the fever; he applied blisters, with a prayer for the efficacy, but all in vain. He had not been gone an hour, before he was again summoned, and came just in time to see the dear lamented *Juliet* expire; who, like a drooping lily, bowed her head and died.

Her unhappy mother was almost deprived of her senses at the loss of her only child, the comfort and delight of her drooping years. Oh! had this sweet girl been permitted to enjoy that fortune which would have devolved on her, she might have lived to have been the ornament of her neighbourhood, and the pride and delight of her friends.

On her death-bed she gave orders for her funeral, chose her own bearers, six young ladies

ladies, the early companions of her happy hours.

When I was admitted to the chamber-door, that contained the object I so passionately adored, a starting astonishment seized me, and tears of sensibility dropped. Her lovely face was shaded with a lawn cap, bound with white ribbon; her bed was hung with white, and between the folds of the counterpane that covered the lamented faint, violets were carelessly thrown. Oh, *Parker!* could you have had a sight of this once enchanting fair one!—It was music when she spoke—and when she spoke encouragement, it was little less than rapture—Where are those blushing cheeks?—Where is that ivory neck on which her fine curling hair in such glossy ringlets flowed?—Amazing alteration!—With these reflections, and a heart oppressed with grief, I retired.

At the door I met her disconsolate parent, who asked her attendant to support her to the room that contained all her treasure. When she beheld the corpse she started, and

hastily returned to her apartment ; and, throwing herself on a sofa, gave a loose to the anguish of her soul.

I arose early the next morning, with a mind tuned to softness, and hurried on shore to attend the funeral of the dear *Juliet*. At ten o'clock the sad procession slowly moved. Her relations and friends approached eagerly round; they wept—they called on their angelic friend—Her neighbours pressed forward to perform the last melancholy duties—not a dry eye was to be seen—Had you heard the piercing cries, my dear *Parker*, that proceeded from maternal love, when the remains of her darling child was torn from her, soft pity would have touched your heart. The weeping bearers silently came round to perform the last request of their dear *Juliet*. The mourners in solemn anguish followed. Had you heard (whilst a neighbouring clergyman gave a very excellent discourse on the occasion) the soft sympathizing sorrow of the sweet girls that sat around the sad shell,
where,

where, hearsed in death, the pale remains of their loved companion lay, it would have excited sensibility in the coldest heart.

Mourn, mourn, ye virgins! sighed forth my distressed soul. Scarce were they able to bend their steps to the sacred tomb, where the honoured clay of her deceased parent lay mouldering into dust; the solemn duty and respect being paid, a flood of tears gushed from each eye, and sprinkled the hallowed ground.

The natives of this Island keep up many of their ancient customs, for the poorest peasants prepare their shrouds perhaps years before they have occasion for them; which is a fine cloth sheet, and a cambric cap, in which they are buried; and no distress can oblige these honest and industrious creatures to part with them, till that awful moment requires that decent covering. The neighbours and friends attend the corpse, which they never leave alone. Having no undertakers to hurry them to their last home,

each attends his neighbour in this peaceful Isle; distinctions and inequalities being forgot at this solemn period, except when the indigent require it.

To divert my spirits from this scene of woe, that so deeply affected me, I took a turn through the town, which, to the credit of the inhabitants of Ramsay, is much improved. Of late many ruinous houses have been pulled down and rebuilt; and their streets made more regular and spacious. But, alas! one of the noblest buildings among them is now almost deserted. Oh, what ravages has death, in a short time, made amongst the worthiest characters!—Here the afflicted families endeavour to comfort themselves for the loss of their parents, by the promise recorded by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, “*Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive;*” this consolation has healed many of their bleeding wounds.

My melancholy led me to view the delightful garden of sweets, that had afforded, from its eminence, so charming a prospect

spect of our ships, and where first I saw the lovely lamented *Juliet*—which the spade and pruning knife, in the hand of industry and taste, had improved into a sort of terrestrial paradise—but the woodbine bowers, whose fragrance invited the traveller in, and all the beauteous flowers, drooped and withered when the good man died, and wild thistles has almost robbed that pleasant spot of its charms.

After paying my respects to all my kind friends at Ramsay, I took a melancholy leave of a place that held all that was once dear to me. I hastened on board the ship, and was soon under sail, and we anchored in Douglas Bay.

I went on shore immediately, having but a few hours to spend with the dear *Evelina* and *Lydia*, as we had received orders to join the fleet. I found them both much improved, and as happy as their hearts could wish in their pleasant retreat. The house is formed on the most approved plan, and finished in the most distinguished stile.

They said a thousand kind things of their guardian.

I was highly pleased with Mr. *Wilding*, his sentiments are noble, and the generosity of his heart extensive; he is a tender and polite husband, and a zealous and steady friend; and his joy at the appearance of an increase in his family, assures me he will make a fond father.

And now, my dear *Parker*, I must conclude this long and melancholy letter, and I dare say you will be sorry for the distressing subject that occasioned it. Farewel, my dear friend; I hasten to obey our Commodore's orders—we have been repeatedly under his command, when the British flag rid triumphant over that of our enemies, and that it may continue so, is the ardent wish of, dear *Parker*,

Your sincere Friend,

W. BATEMAN.

LETTER

LETTER LVII.

Mrs. MANDEVILLE to Mrs. NORMAN,
near Strebane, Ireland.

How many uneasy hours, my dear Mrs. *Norman*, does your charming correspondence alleviate! Since I have learned to disclose my griefs to you, methinks I feel them less; sorrow, that finds vent in words, no longer preys deeply on the spirits, nor renders so bitterly the throbbing heart. What gratitude do I not owe you, my amiable friend, for your generous conduct? Your kind present was most acceptable to my grateful heart; and the manner of bestowing it made the gift more precious.

With what pleasure did I hear of my dear Mrs. *Barrymore*'s intention of returning to England; I feel myself extremely obliged and honoured by her kind sentiments in my favour. How happy do I think myself in the notice and friendship of so many ami-

able characters—a grateful tear steals down my cheek at reflecting on their philanthropy; for can there be a greater pleasure than to be noticed by virtuous minds?—The vicissitudes of life I have experienced, my dear friend, I hope have sufficiently armed my mind with philosophy to bear every future misfortune that fate may involve me in. What gratitude do I not owe to Heaven for my late escape from such imminent danger, and the providential assistance of Mr. *Goodall*, who rescued me from a scene of danger and distress, and with the most humane tenderness, poured the balm of friendship into my wounded mind. Oh that Providence would enable me to discharge the many obligations I am under to my kind friends, which lay heavy at my heart!

I dined yesterday with Mr. *Goodall* and his lovely boy, his whole behaviour was uniformly respectful and brotherly; he sets off for Scotland in a few days.

How blest should I think myself, my dear
Mrs.

Mrs. *Norman*, to find an asylum under the hospitable roof of some good lady as her companion or humble attendant, to shield me from the malice of my enemies, and the dangers my defenceless situation subjects me to. Adieu, my dear loved friend: When I began this I thought to write but a few lines; but, be my subject what it will, I know not how to conclude when I write to you on my most interesting and unhappy situation, which you will allow, to engross at present the mind of

Your ever-affectionate,

CLARA MANDEVILLE.

LETTER LVIII.

SIR ROBERT STANLEY to Mr. WILDING,
Isle of Man.

DEAR CHARLES,

Grosvenor Street, London.

I AM just arrived in town from Bath, where the gout detained me some time: I

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there

there met an old acquaintance, you may have heard me mention; *Captain Travers*, an old school-fellow of mine, who is just returned to England; a bad state of health obliging him to leave his regiment: he has spent some time at Bath with his lady, who is a very beautiful woman, and much younger than himself. I accompanied them to their pretty villa, which the *Captain* has purchased, *Mrs. Travers* being partial to Shropshire. She is highly esteemed in that country for her charity to the poor and indigent, which she daily and secretly relieves.

In our travels we met *Colonel Elwood*, who soon ingratiated himself in the good opinion of my friend. I found he was in pursuit of the sweet fugitive he so cruelly neglected. *Mrs. Travers's* beauty soon attracted his notice, and prevented his pursuing the unfortunate *Maria*. If my friend *Travers's* penetrating eye should observe the least impropriety in the *Colonel's* behaviour to his wife, the consequence may be fatal.

Captain

Captain Travers is of a jealous temper, but generous, brave, and just: his nice sense of honour would lead him to resent the least injury offered him; *Elwood's* known character ought to prevent this bewitching beauty from giving him the least shadow of encouragement.

I think myself greatly obliged to you, dear *Charles*, for your kind invitation, next year I promise myself that pleasure; I am quite charmed with the description you give of *Mona*, and your domestic happiness. At present London is quite gay—the beautiful blossom that has made her appearance in Pall Mall, has created universal joy—Breathe soft ye winds—oh spare ye powers the tender beautiful blossom, that ripper years may diffuse the sweets of felicity into her maternal bosom, and ease the brow of care—The presence of this lovely parent yesterday at Court, drew an amazing crowd. Her form was symmetry itself—and the graces waited on her motions—her dress, in which taste and elegance displayed their

brilliant parts, was well adapted to the delicacy of her complexion, occasioned by her late confinement—Her manner was irresistibly charming—she has all the smiling graces—all the blushing delicacy of her sex. Virtue, my dear *Wilding*, is never so lovely as when drest in smiles. Animated by the sweetest disposition, and cherished by hope, she seemed to give and receive happiness.—Nor did her happy royal consort fall short of admiration—his manner was so uncommonly graceful and easy, that had he even fewer charms of person, that alone would distinguish him from almost any man I ever saw—and his heart, *Wilding*, is the seat of humanity—there benevolence breathes her sweets.

Some remains of the gout will oblige me to visit Bath again. I shall call at Ely Grove, and pay my respects to my highly esteemed friends there. On my return I shall spend some days with *Captain Travers* and his lady, at their pretty lodge.

I find *Colonel Elwood* still remains in
Shropshire

Shropshire; I sincerely wish he would marry the sweet girl he has so grossly deceived, and repair the injury he has done a worthy and respectable family.

I dine to-morrow at a relation of his, Lady *Wilmot*, who is now a lady of fashion, without taste or elegance; *Sir John* accumulated a large fortune in India, and a relation of his dying there, left him sole heir to an affluent fortune; in consequence of which, he was knighted on his return to London. I had some knowledge of him when he married his lady, who was an only daughter to a wealthy citizen.

Farewel, dear *Charles*, I am going to the play, the carriage is at the door. Make my compliments to the ladies—you may tell the sprightly Miss *Lydia*, when I arrive at Mona, I will be the hermit, if she will promise to be the sleeping lady: and believe me to be

Your's sincerely,

ROBERT STANLEY.

LETTER

LETTER LIX.

Miss BATEMAN to Miss HOWE.

Isle of Man.

AH! my dear Miss *Howe*, the death of the sweet *Juliet* has cast a gloom over Wilding-park. My dear *Evelina* is inconsolable for the loss. I caught her this morning amusing herself with her pen. Peeping over her shoulder I read the following lines, on the amiable *Juliet*:—

*More sweetness ne'er adorn'd a female mind,
Enliv'n'd wit, a judgment well refin'd,
Superior far to each delusive art,
She spoke the dictates of an honest heart;
Along the humble road of life she mov'd,
The cares of virtue still her mind improv'd;
How few could boast the virtues of the fair—*

Just then a flood of tears, sacred to the memory of the dear departed saint, prevented her from adding more. On observing me behind her, she arose from her seat and

and went into the drawing-room, where Mr. *Wilding* was writing. Twining her arms round his neck, and hiding her blushing face in his bosom—"Oh! *Charles*, (said she) should death snatch me from you, at the awful crisis I must shortly experience, and spare my infant, it will demand your utmost fortitude, as well as tenderness. For my sake I have no doubt you will exert yourself to the utmost, and endeavour to compensate the loss of maternal care."—"My angel (replied Mr. *Wilding*, whose smothered emotions betrayed the tumult he endeavoured to conceal) what can have given cause to this alarm?"—"I was thinking, (answered she) of the gentle *Juliet's* sudden death—that sweet flower, cut down in the bloom of life."

I then endeavoured to divert her attention from the melancholy subject, and, sitting down to the piano-forte, played one of her favorite airs. She smiled through her tears at this effort, which had the desired effect, and a short walk in the garden restored her
former

former tranquillity. Mr. *Wilding* sincerely laments the loss of our sweet friend, who he had flattered himself would prove a valuable addition to our society, though he conceals his regret, from prudential motives, in the presence of *Evelina*. My uncle *Bateman* arrived just as the remains of his beloved *Juliet* were conveying to the tomb. As my pen is totally inadequate to depict his feelings, I shall leave your sensibility to form a judgment of them, and content myself with observing that he made but a short stay at Mona, where every object tended to remind him of his irreparable loss.

Your *Lydia*, my dear *Louisa*, is not so happy, as when she last wrote to you—This cruel war calls all the charming fellows away—My elegant Captain is ordered abroad—I begin to think him necessary to my happiness—He proposes giving a farewell ball in a few days, and intreated my permission to dance with me—then, sighing, and taking your *Lydia* by the hand, “per-
mit

mit me to assure you, my dear Miss *Bateman* (said he) that while my heart was captivated by your amiable vivacity, and merit, I wanted the power of speech to tell you so. I leave my dear girl with regret—Allow me to hope——” More he would have said but my sister entering the room, he took a respectful leave of us, after privately assuring me that his future happiness depended entirely on me, and, mounting his horse, was presently out of sight, leaving me in a state of mind I had never before experienced.

I was charmed with his melting sensibility, and his graceful and unassuming manner has completed the conquest of my heart. But as the post is going off I must conclude, and can only add, that a letter from my dear Miss *Howe* will confer the greatest pleasure on,

Her affectionate Friend,

LYDIA BATEMAN.

LETTER

LETTER LX.

Mrs. MANDEVILLE to Miss HOWE.

I TAKE the earliest opportunity to thank my dear Miss *Howe* for her pretty present and kind letter, which I received last night. I think the painter has not done you justice, although he has preserved a resemblance. I will wear it next my heart—not that I need any external token to remind me of the amiable original, for friendship has already kindled its purest and most exalted flame in my breast, and which, I trust will never be extinguished till life ceases to animate my heart.

I continue, my dear *Louisa*, busily engaged with my needle and pencil, and become daily more chearful and resigned to the humble station, which the inscrutable dispensation of Almighty providence has allotted me. My mind would be still more at ease, did I but know how my beloved sister, and my

my much revered friend Mr. *Brook* are, from neither of whom have I heard for a considerable time past, though I have not omitted my usual custom of writing to them. I hope no malicious or evil-minded person has succeeded in prejudicing their minds against me. Much have I already suffered from the arrows of slander; may gracious Heaven protect me from its further attacks.

A loud knocking at the door—Who can it be, my dear *Louisa*, that will condescend to visit an unfortunate widow in her obscure retreat!—I am called——I resume my pen, but can convey but a faint idea of my feelings at finding my visitor to be no other than Miss *Hervey*. She accosted me with her usual assurance—enquired after my health—and congratulated me, without the least embarrassment, on my recovery from my late illness, and the shock my spirits had sustained.

“ I am but just arrived from the country,
(continued she) and was impatient to see
my

my dear Mrs. *Mandeville* ; for, notwithstanding your cool behaviour to me at parting, I am sincerely your friend ; and, though the business I am come about is of a disagreeable nature, yet as it is necessary you should be apprized of it, in order the better to prepare yourself against the period when the event shall actually take place, I hope you will not deem my conduct officious, nor inconsistent with friendship. Summons your fortitude, then, my dear Madam, and let your indignation at his inconstancy, repel your regret for his loss, whilst you peruse this paragraph." At the conclusion of this harangue, in which my faculties were absorbed in silent astonishment, she presented me with a newspaper.

As soon as I had sufficiently recovered my recollection, I ran my eye down the paper, and the following words arrested my attention :— ‘ We hear that *Henry Walpole, Esq. and his charming lady*, will take their passage for England in the *Valentine*, which is hourly expected to fail.’

I returned

I returned the paper with cold civility, while my heart was appalled at the information. From my sister's letters I had flattered myself with the hope that I had yet some hold of my *Henry's* heart, which I had never ceased to esteem. This disappointment therefore gave me a severe shock, which she immediately perceived, and attempted to soothe. Then observing some work which lay near me, "I am sorry to see my dear friend, (said she) so reduced as to be obliged to take in work. *Colonel Elwood* will, however, be in town in a short time. He has written me a letter, wherein he expresses the highest esteem for you, and manifests the highest regret for the indignity he treated you with; he likewise begs me to assure you, that both his purse and his heart are at your service."

"*Colonel Elwood*, Madam, (replied I, with disdain) is the last man in the world I would suffer myself to be obliged to; and I am surprized, Miss *Hervey*, after what has passed, that you should introduce such a subject!

The

The murderer of my much-lamented *Horatio* can never obtain my good opinion! The very mention of his name renews all my woes."—A flood of tears relieved my oppressed spirits, and I arose from my seat, with an intent of retiring up stairs. On perceiving this she took a hasty leave, visibly chagrined and disappointed; and will not, I hope, again intrude herself. I once esteemed and regarded her as a faithful friend, but dear-bought experience has fatally deceived me.

There appears a strange mystery, my dear *Louisa*, in Miss *Hervey's* conduct; she seems to take a pleasure in representing Mr. *Walpole* in an unfavourable light; however, in this instance she cannot have deceived me, as the public newspaper testified for her. Yet why she should interest herself so warmly in acquainting me with it is what perplexes me beyond measure.

But I will endeavour to conquer my passion; and, at his return will cautiously endeavour to avoid his sight; nor give him
and

and his bride a single opportunity to triumph in my disappointment.

Oh, the sweet *Juliet*, I have shed tears over that part of your letter where you mention her death. What must Mr. *Bateman's* feelings be! It gave me pleasure to hear of Mr. *Wilding's* domestic happiness. Blest with two such amiable companions, with transport must he look forward to his increase of family.

I was much pleased likewise to hear that my dear friend Mrs. *Norman*, intends to visit Ely-grove. Assure Mrs. *Howe* of my best wishes for a continuance of her health. Let me have the earliest intelligence of every material circumstance that occurs, and believe me to be, my dear *Louisa*,

Your obliged,

And affectionate friend,

CLARA MANDEVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER LXI.

Mr. WILDING to COLONEL LAVINGTON.

Isle of Man.

YOUR obliging letter, my dear Sir, afforded me the greatest pleasure. To hear that mutual happiness has once more resumed its seat in your heart, and that of your amiable consort, affords me the highest gratification. It will, I am certain, afford her pleasure to hear that my beloved *Evelina*, a few days since, presented me with a son and heir; this happy event has of course given us the most heart-felt joy. *Lydia* devotes all her time and attention to her sister and the little nursery.

I still find the scenes around me lovely, though, from the change of season, less smiling than when I first fixed in the Isle of Man. We have rural business enough to amuse not to embarrass. The neighbourhood is full of agreeable people, and, what should be always

ways considered, of fortunes not superior to our own.

The evenings are grown long, but they are the more jovial. I love the pleasures of the table. Cards, books, music, and the engaging conversation of each other will afford sufficient entertainment; and, should we be at any time inclined to melancholy, the sportive *Lydia* will rouse us from the gloom, by her charming vivacity.

Yesterday I strolled into the fields; at some little distance from the park, near a large willow-tree, the ground gave way, and my foot slipped; on stooping down I perceived a well, which was over-grown with grass. A little cottage being adjacent to the spot, I entered the wicket, where an old woman sat spinning, and having borrowed a glass, with her assistance I drew up some of the water, which proved extremely palatable. I afterwards took a turn on the beach, and was agreeably entertained with the moving scene of the ships passing and re-passing in the bay.

After enjoying this amusing scene for some time, I returned home, with a keen appetite, and my spirits uncommonly exhilarated. This I imputed, in some degree, to the effects of the water, and accordingly sent for a couple of bottles of it, part of which Miss *Bateman* drank, and experienced the same effects. It is, I think, similar, both in taste and quality, to the Buxton waters. I intend to have it enclosed by a wall, and a circle of hawthorns planted round it.—*Lydia* has named it *The Mank's Spa*. *Evelina* smiles at the hidden treasure I have discovered, and amuses herself with inventing new embellishments, with which we are to decorate it the ensuing spring ; about which time we hope, my dear Sir, to be favoured with your company, and that of Mrs. *La-vington*. We expect Mrs. *Bateman* next summer, and if my friend *Sir Robert Stanley* should favour us with a visit, our group of friends will be then complete. As a farther inducement for you to come, permit me to remind you that this isle will furnish you with
fine

fine opportunity of pursuing your experiments in natural philosophy, as well as in enriching your collection of minerals and fossils; here is also a plentiful range for the botanist and zoologist. I am, my dear Sir, with unfeigned regard,

Your sincere friend,

CHARLES WILDING.

LETTER LXII.

SIR ROBERT STANLEY to Mr. WILDING.

DEAR *Charles*, I am quite ashamed that your letter should have lain by me so long unanswered; but I have been so much engaged of late I have not had a moment to call my own.

After spending a day with the agreeable Mr. and Mrs. *L.* I proceeded to Bath. On my return I spent some time with *Captain*

H 2

Travers,

Travers, who began to be alarmed at the particular attention, and improper freedoms taken by *Colonel Elwood*, who was a constant visitor there. He imparted his sentiments on this subject to his lady, in the mildest and most gentle terms ; and without assuming the authority of a husband, reasoned with all the tenderness of a friend. He was charmed to find a perfect coincidence of sentiment in the breast of his lady, who assured him that she anxiously wished to get rid of his visits, and should think it one of the happiest things in her life to be freed from the troubles and importunities of a man whom honor and prudence taught her to avoid ; and recommended a journey to Bristol Hotwells as the best method for that purpose. *Captain Travers* cheerfully assented to this proposal, and the next day gave an elegant entertainment on the occasion, which concluded with a masked ball.

Colonel Elwood having gained intelligence of the kind of dress my friend intended to wear,

wear, procured a similar one, and, being exactly his height, resolved to personate him, having bribed Mrs. T.'s woman with that all-powerful temptation gold to give him an opportunity of being alone with her lady.

Mrs. *Travers* having overheated herself with dancing, retired to a back-room, that overlooked the flower-garden, for the benefit of the air, and ringing for her maid, threw herself on the sofa, and had recourse to her salts. Her attendant entered the room with a glass of water, in which she had privately infused some pernicious ingredient, which she prevailed on her to take.

The *Colonel*, having watched her motions, soon followed her in his mask, saluted her with great freedom, and was proceeding to further liberties. On finding her mistake she screamed out, and endeavoured with all her strength to disengage herself from his arms. The noise alarmed *Captain Travers*, who, being engaged in dancing a Scotch reel, did not know his wife had quitted the

ball. He entered the room while she was struggling to resist the *Colonel's* base attempt, and high words immediately ensued, during which the lady fainted.

Colonel Elwood having basely insinuated something disadvantageous to the lady's reputation, still further provoked *Captain Travers*, who called him a villain, and a challenge immediately ensued ; after which the *Colonel* quitted the house.

The attention of *Captain Travers* was then directed to his wife, who had been conveyed to bed, in a state of insensibility, during the altercation. Finding her more composed, he returned to the company, and apologized to them, alledging that a sudden indisposition had occasioned her to retire.

Captain Travers not being of a disposition to waste his time in unavailing complaints, repaired early the next morning to the *Colonel's* lodgings, notwithstanding my persuasions to the contrary. He immediately insisted on an explicit explanation of the base insinuations

insinuations he had thrown out the preceding evening; to which the other returned a doubtful answer; and insolently added, he was surprised at the liberty he took in questioning him. *Captain Travers*, like a soldier, and a man of spirit, rejecting the tedious forms of a legal litigation, and despising any prospect of pecuniary advantages that might accrue from it, insisted on immediate satisfaction, and requested my company as his second. A place was fixed on by them both, and Mr. *Medley* and a surgeon, who were found at breakfast with him, attended. The first pass the *Colonel* made, slightly wounded my friend, who, at length, run him through the body. He then confessed his guilt and villainy, and assured *Captain Travers* of his wife's innocence; and, seemingly in an agony of pain, cried out—"Oh, *Medley*, I am dying!—Find out the poor injured *Maria* and her child—Bear me home, (continued he, his voice faltering) that I may make some provision for them!"—

Just then I was suddenly alarmed with the cries of a female behind a hedge, and hastened over the stile, while the surgeon was dressing their wounds, when I saw a beautiful female fainting in the arms of an elderly lady, and close by stood a lovely boy. "Will nobody come to my assistance?" cried she. I immediately approached, and offered my service—Fortune contrived to shew the sweet girl to the utmost advantage—Her aunt had thrown up her veil, and bared her beautiful hands and arms, polished and white as the finest marble, whilst every feature might bear the nicest examination—and appeared, perhaps, more exquisitely regular from the absence of expression—and her figure and attitude, leaning on her aunt's knees, presented a perfect model for sculpture. At the request of her friend, I supported her to a pretty cottage, which stood at the end of the wood, under the shade of a cluster of trees; when, laying her on a sofa, with the help of hartshorn, she revived; and lifting up her languid eyes,

Oh

Oh my sweet lamb! (said she, faintly drawing her little boy towards her,) you had once a father—a cruel father!”—She had a recollection of what she had heard him say when he was wounded, which overpowered her senses.

That moment the surgeon entered the cottage, and intreated Mrs. *Heartley*’s permission to have a gentleman brought in who had fainted through loss of blood; and the distance from his house, and his dangerous situation, urged him to request this favour. Mrs. *Heartley*, whose heart was awake to all the fine feelings of humanity, consented to his request. The *Colonel* was brought in, and laid on the sofa. While the surgeon was dressing his wounds, which had bled afresh, my friend *Travers* hung over him, regardless of his own situation. But what pen can describe, my dear *Charles*, the interesting scene that followed.

As soon as *Colonel Elwood* opened his eyes, and espied poor Miss *Godfrey*, reclining on her aunt’s bosom, while tears stole down

her pale cheeks, a variety of passions took possession of his soul—joy, remorse, grief, and horror, visibly appeared in his countenance—He earnestly intreated the *Almighty* to spare him a little longer.

“ Oh, *Maria!* (cried he, in great agony,) can you forgive the man that has disturbed the peace of your family, and robbed you of the brightest jewel your sex can boast?” Then ordering the child to be brought to him, he kissed and blest the sweet cherub—and desired his servant to fetch him an attorney immediately. “ I am dying,” continued he faintly, and sunk down on the sofa. “ O, be after having a little patience! (cried *Derby,*) you won’t die yet surely, and leave your poor servant behind you—may be, in a little time, I may be ready to go with your Honour;” then, wiping his eyes, set off for the attorney.

The *Colonel* then acquitted *Captain Travers* of any design on his life; he having provoked him to this act by very injurious language:

language: and after shaking hands with mutual forgiveness, he fell into a composed sleep. The surgeon accompanied *Captain Travers* home, who was unhappy on his lady's account.

On *Derby's* arrival with the attorney, *Colonel Elwood* settled his fortune on *Maria* and her son, excepting a few legacies. The agitation of the charming girl drew tears from our eyes—Her former resentment vanished at seeing him thus penitent, and soft sorrow, and kind humanity, took place. Branded with the guilt of seducing the innocent from the paths of rectitude, honor, and duty, he could scarce look up to the innocent *Maria*!—yet, with agitated voice, he said, “There is but one thing wanting to make me die in peace; will you, *Maria*, accept of a heart and hand that ought to have been your's long before?—I am dying, (exclaimed he,) my dear girl; you will not refuse this last request for your own and infant's sake.” The blushes that visited and

revisited her languid countenance, assured him of her heart-felt concern.

At that moment a post-chaise drove up to the door, and the Reverend Mr. *Godfrey* appeared. Great was his surprize to see the *Colonel*, and in such a deplorable situation. The latter, in the midst of pain and grief, intreated the astonished parent's forgiveness for the injury he had done him; and then intreated him to consent to an union with him and Miss *Godfrey*, that he might make her all the amends in his power. He looked at his daughter, who sweetly blushed consent, and accordingly gave his approbation. A special licence was sent for; and early the next morning they were united, while the pleasant blushing bride knelt beside him, tenderly solicitous to prolong a life now important to her; and thus happily has this affair ended. The *Colonel* is still extremely weak. *Captain Travers* is in a fair way of recovery; and happy in the affections of his lady, whose whole attention is devoted to his health. I
am

am sent for, *Colonel Lavington* is just arrived. Farewel, dear *Charles*, I know you will rejoice in poor *Miss Godfrey's* happiness. I will take an early opportunity to write again, till then believe me, dear *Wilding*,

Sincerely your's,

R. STANLEY.

LETTER LXIII.

Mrs. MANDEVILLE to Miss HOWE,
at Ely Grove.

AGREEABLE to my dear *Miss Howe's* request, I take the earliest opportunity in forwarding her letter, and the inclosed miniature to *Captain Parker*; the fashionable bonnet and feathers I shall send by the stage; and will, with pleasure, obey all my dear *Louisa's* commands as soon as possible. A message being brought me, that my poor faithful *Susan* lay ill of a fever, in a deplorable

able lodging; her cruel mistress having sent her out of the house when she had no longer the power to serve her. I was hastening to assist the poor distressed girl when another message was brought me, from the charming *Lady Angelina*, to attend her. I immediately waited on her ladyship, and, on sending up my name, was admitted to her dressing-room—But never did I see beauty in so graceful an attitude—As I entered the room, she was sitting at her harp, her sweet voice melodiously accompanying the instrument: “Pray sit down Mrs. *Mandeville* (said this generous lady,) agreeable to my promise I have made some interest for you, and am happy to have the power to present you the inclosed; and permit me, Madam, (continued this lovely woman,) to add a trifle to it—I regret my confined circumstances will not allow me to offer you something more worthy your acceptance—I feel myself greatly interested in your happiness;”—whilst a graceful smile and glittering tear accompanied her words.

To

To give, my dear *Louisa*, is an act of power common to the great; but to double any gift by the manner of bestowing it, is an art known only to the most elegant minds, and a pleasure tasted by none but persons of the most refined humanity.

Lady Meanwell then approached me, and, with a benevolent smile, assured me she had sympathized with me. This amiable mother feels herself happy to see her race renewed in the children of her daughter, who is now on the eve of being united to the noble *Lord Belmont*, whose affluent fortune will give her virtues room and power to act, and draw additional blessings on his name; thus all matters adjusted to their satisfaction, the hours, I hope, will roll away in transports.

After assisting my grateful *Susan* I returned home, where I found a letter from my dear Mrs. *Barrymore*, who expects to be in London in a short time. Say every thing for me to my kind friends at Ely Grove, where I find you now are; I hope to see
them

them in London soon, as winter will rob their charming villa of its beauties; I shall see its approach with unconcern, as it will bring so many dear friends to town; and I hope my sweet *Louisa* will add to the number, which is the ardent wish of her

Obliged and grateful,

CLARA MANDEVILLE.

LETTER LXIV.

Miss BATEMAN to Miss HOWE.

Isle of Man.

I HAVE been so much engaged, my dear Miss *Howe*, lately with our little nursery, that I have not had an opportunity of answering your last obliging letter sooner. My sister is grateful for your friendship, and shares your joy; she sends you her best thanks for your kind enquiries; the dear little *Charles* engrosses all her attention, she gives

gives up all to the sweet delight of nursing.

Let me see, I believe I concluded my last letter with preparing to go to a ball, which was very brilliant. I assure you, the lovely Miss *Freethinker* was there from Ramfay, and moved a minuet with my lover, as I declined it. If *Eliza* is not a first-rate beauty, she is undoubtedly, (to make use of a familiar phrase,) one of the most engaging girls in the Island; she is witty, sprightly, and good tempered; besides a certain degree of simplicity and native innocence, inspires all her actions, so that were she possessed of the contrary effects, they must have lain concealed. I shall have a friendship for this agreeable girl, though I am a little inclined to be jealous of her superior charms. We danced in rotation, you must know, and I could observe, in spite of a great flow of spirits and vivacity, now and then, some symptoms of tenderness in her eyes, which she frequently fixed on him; but I may be mistaken, it
may

may proceed from the pleasantness of her disposition. At parting my lover declared one of us had bereaved him of his heart, and believed the stolen goods to be in your *Lydia's* possession. "I have a charge of the same nature, (cried *Eliza*, laughing,) against one of the gentlemen; but there is little justice to be expected from their lordly sex." Thus delightfully did the evening end.

The next day he called at Wilding Park, and took an affectionate leave of your *Lydia*. You desire me to give you a description of my swain, I will oblige you, my dear *Louisa*, but pray take care you do not fall in love with the picture. He has a fair complexion, light hair, blue eyes; his stature is noble, his conversation learned and agreeable, with the easiest air in the world, which I prefer to the most exact symmetry: and I am not a little proud of my hero, as it is generally thought he greatly resembles a royal warrior. Can you wonder

der then at your *Lydia's* heart being susceptible of his beauty and merit?

Since he left Mona I have, though much against my inclination, made a conquest of a gentleman, of Welch descent, who has almost arrived at his grand climacteric; yet he thinks himself young enough for a bride of fifteen, and is very ambitious of ennobling my name in his genealogical list, which he thinks will make amends for his ruined constitution. But I hear the postman's knock—I fly to know if there is a letter from my dear grandmamma—Adieu for a while!—Again I resume my pen—Oh, my dear *Louisa*!—What a letter has Mr. *Wilding* received from *Sir Robert Stanley*!—How agreeably were we surprised with the contents of it!—The poor *Maria* is, by the strangest circumstances, now Mrs. *Elwood*.—I hope he will reward her for the distress she has endured, by the most affectionate behaviour, should he live. How will Mrs. *Mandeville* rejoice in this union!—A heart like her's, softened by an
unhappy

unhappy knowledge of distress, will feel a double pleasure in the agreeable recollection of having been instrumental in that event, by snatching this amiable and deluded girl from the horrors of despair, and restoring her to the paternal arms of an indulgent father!—But a message is brought that my company is desired in the drawing-room, to make a whist party—my old beau is there—he is become quite a serious lover, I assure you—I will keep him in my train as a dangler—they are useful creatures, you know, *Louisa*, to escort us about. Again I am sent for—Adieu, my dear Miss *Howe*. That you may enjoy every wish of your heart,

Prays your

LYDIA BATEMAN.

LETTER LXV.

Mrs. ELWOOD to Mrs. MANDEVILLE.

Shropshire.

THE generous concern, Madam, that you kindly expressed for my unhappy situation,

tion, and the humanity and generosity with which you interested yourself in my sufferings, convince me of the excellence of your heart, which, I make no doubt, will feel a pleasure in hearing of my present happiness, which the overflowings of a grateful heart prompts me to acquaint you with.

On my return to Godfrey-house I found my former acquaintance withdrew their friendship, and triumphed over my fall with haughty pride. To avoid the pain such conduct gave me, and urged by paternal care for my safety, I set off for Shropshire; where, under the protection of my mother's sister, I found a happy asylum. Her pretty cottage being almost buried under the shade of a wood, and a winding avenue, adorned with young poplars and evergreens, leading from it to the road, made this refuge extremely pleasant. In this elysian retreat, and the affections of my beloved aunt, my mind became quite reconciled to my unfortunate situation.

One day Mrs. *Heartley*, myself, and my
little

little *Frederick*, walked out in a beautiful meadow, which joined the wood, and resting a few minutes on a seat under the shade of the trees, my ears were suddenly alarmed with the clashing of swords, and the sound of a dying man's voice: but, what horrors took possession of my soul when I knew it to be the voice of my infant's father!—A variety of passions seized my mind; I fainted, and became totally insensible to what afterwards passed. On reviving and opening my eyes, you can better imagine than I describe my feelings when I saw *Colonel Elwood* laid on a sofa dangerously wounded, and to all appearance dying: his dreadful situation, and apparent penitence, awakened a dawn of my former tenderness, and humanity took place of resentment. After settling a handsome fortune on your now happy and grateful *Maria* and my dear boy, how could I refuse my hand in his almost dying moments?—The excruciating pain he has suffered, and a severe reflection on his past follies, has
I hope

I hope wrought an entire reformation in him—that will make him for the future abandon those criminal pleasures which he certainly thought not of with that abhorrence he ought. The *Colonel* is now declared out of danger: and, filled with remorse for his former conduct to you, Madam, is willing to make you any recompence in his power. When I acquainted him with the horrors of despair his cruelty had drove me to, and which brought me to experience your exalted humanity, he heaved a deep sigh, and a tear of remembrance stole on his pale countenance, which was the emblem of death. He groaned out Miss *Hervey's* name, and accused her of having encouraged him in his attempts on you. He joins me in gratitude, and wishes that your future happiness and health may be equal to your merits. Adieu, my dear friend! and rest assured you will ever find me

Your grateful,

MARIA ELWOOD.

LETTER LXVI.

Mrs. MANDEVILLE to Miss HOWE.

IN obedience to my dear Miss *Howe*'s request, I again resume my pen, to relate a thousand agreeable circumstances that will give pleasure to her generous heart:—First, then, the amiable *Maria* is the happy wife of a reformed rake, for such *Colonel Elwood* now appears. Secondly, my dear friend *Mrs. Barrymore* is arrived, and your *Clara* again under her protection.

The house *Mr. Barrymore* has purchased is delightfully situated on an elevated bank of the river, and commands a most extensive picturesque view, of great beauty. The apartments are fitted up in the most superb style, and every thing is conducted on the grandest and most elegant scale.

We had a large party yesterday, and being dressed early, was sitting in the green-room, which is a favourite apartment of
Mrs.

Mrs. B. decorated with some fine drawings, and tastefully ornamented with a curious collection of flowering shrubs, both natural and artificial. Some of the company, coming earlier than was expected, were conducted into this room; among the rest the servant announced *Lady Wilmot*, but judge of my surprize, my dear *Louisa*, when under this title I discovered the citizen's daughter to whom I had once offered myself as companion or humble friend.

She had scarce seated herself, when perceiving the shrubs, she exclaimed in a faint and affected tone, those odoriferous plants quite oppress my spirits—I am so nervous I fear I shall faint!—and then threw herself on the sofa.

I offered her a glass of water and my smelling-bottle, saying—"I am sorry, my Lady, the flowers should so disagreeably affect you; those delicious objects not only address themselves agreeably to the senses, but touch with surprizing delicacy the sweet movements of the mind."—"Oh the odious

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I

things!

things ! (cried she) they quite discompose my nervous system."—fixing her eyes on the miniature she wore on her arm.

"I wonder they should excite such disagreeable sensations in your Ladyship, when Majesty itself retires from the luxuries of a court, to enjoy for a while more refined pleasures in the regions of *Flora*.

At that moment my benefactress entered :
 "Oh, my dear Mrs. B. (cried she) I have been extremely ill ! How can you bear such a quantity of flowers in the room ? The scent of those roses (which were artificial ones) have quite overpowered me." My friend smiled—She then, whispering her, enquired who I was ; "It is not, surely, (continued she) the young woman who once offered herself to be my maid !" —Mrs. *Barrymore* kindly assured her I was her particular friend—a gentlewoman she very much esteemed.

I was determined to have some revenge for this ridiculous conduct, and therefore let Mr. *Barrymore* into the secret ; and as he despised

despised *Lady Wilmot's* imperious behaviour, he was particularly complaisant and attentive to me, which induced *Sir John* and the elegant *Windham*, who were of the party, to conduct themselves in like manner, which gave me an opportunity of engrossing the conversation for some time, to the great mortification of her Ladyship, who could not conceal her chagrin at the neglect with which she was treated, and the preference which was shewn to one whom her pride led her to despise.

At length, addressing herself to *Sir John*, " Pray, (said she) when do you expect my Cousin *Elwood* in town? He is a charming fellow; so lively, so well-bred, and so attentive to me! Surely, my dear, continued she, he will not be so mad as to marry that country-girl! What can he be about!

Just then the rest of the company was announced, and *Lady Wilmot*, in all the pride of gorgeous apparel, stalked into the drawing-room, attended by *Sir John*. She placed herself on one of the most commodious seats,

and surveyed the company with that supercilious triumph which wealth too frequently inspires in weak minds.

Lady Wilmot, my dear *Louisa*, is a perfect Cinick in disposition; her most favourite amusement is satirizing her neighbours, and having an abundant stock of malevolent ingredients, and a strong memory, joined to an amazing volubility of tongue, she wants nothing but judgment in her choice of objects, and discretion to regulate her attacks, to render her an adept in that science; but for want of these qualities her attempts at ridicule frequently recoil with tenfold weight on her own head. On the name of *Lady Angelina* being mentioned, she took an opportunity to display her unamiable talent. "They say, my dear Mrs. *Barrymore* (said she) that *Lord Belmont* is going to be married to *Lady Angelina Fielding*;—a great match for her—he has a noble fortune—the young ladies of small fortune will all be ready to die with envy."

"*Lady Angelina*, Madam, (replied I) has
virtue,

virtue, beauty, and mental accomplishments sufficient to adorn the highest sphere, which are far superior to the transitory gifts of fortune." The company then entered the saloon, and the conversation became general.

In the course of the evening *Sir John's* servant delivered him a letter, which he requested leave to peruse, and then informed his lady that he must go to town the next day, as the daughter of an old friend had just arrived from India. "She has a large fortune, (says he) and was, when I left India, a most delightful girl. This note (added he) is from *Mr. Walpole*, whom I have frequently seen at her father's."

I know not the remainder of the conversation, as the mention of that loved name, and the idea of his being united to another, had such an effect on my spirits that I was compelled to quit the company. My benefactress soon after came into my room, whither I had retired to give vent to my feelings, and sympathized with me in the tenderest man-

ner. She could not, however, prevail on me again to meet the company, not being able sufficiently to appease the tumult in my breast.

I must now break off, as my benefactress has kindly invited me to accompany her to the play, and I must hasten to dress.—Adieu, therefore, for a few hours.

OH! my *Louisa*, what a sight presented itself to your *Clara*! As the curtain drew up, previous to the entertainment, which was the *Spoil'd Child*, a slight bustle in the opposite box, attracted my attention; but what pen could describe my emotions, when I saw my once-loved *Henry*, with his accustomed elegance and ease, enter the box, conducting a beautiful young lady, who seated herself beside him. I was obliged to have recourse to my salts to preserve me from fainting. He appeared extremely attentive to his fair companion, though at intervals a dejection clouded his countenance, which

which was fallow, and bore the marks of ill health.

I was sensibly shocked at seeing him in this declining state ; for notwithstanding this evident token of his inconstancy, I feel too lively an interest in whatever concerns him, to be unaffected on such an occasion. I whispered Mrs. *Barrymore* the cause of my indisposition, who with her usual goodness proposed quitting the house, and returning home, which I gratefully acceded to, and accordingly prepared for our departure.

The bustle which this occasioned attracted Mr. *Walpole's* notice, who immediately fixed his fine eyes on your unfortunate *Clara*, whose timid looks caught his. He immediately bowed low, and appeared much embarrassed and surprized.

When we got home my spirits were so much agitated that I retired instantly to my chamber, but sleep was a stranger to my eyes, and peace to my bosom. Reflection awakened all my former tendernefs, and excited the keenest sensations of regret. But I will

call my heart to a strict account, and summon reason to my aid, that I may extirpate his image, and banish his remembrance for ever from me. But I must conclude this tedious epistle, which I fear has exhausted your patience.

Remember me in the strongest manner to all friends at Ely-grove, and believe me to be,

Sincerely your's,

CLARA MANDEVILLE.

LETTER LXVII.

Sir ROBERT STANLEY to C. WILDING, Esq.
Isle of Man.

Sherwood House.

I KNOW it will give my dear *Wilding* pleasure to hear that my friend *Captain Travers* is quite recovered of his wounds, and *Colonel Elwood* declared out of danger.
The

The *Captain* and I dined with him and his lovely bride yesterday; he appears perfectly sensible of the impropriety of his former conduct; and seems anxious, by every method in his power, to make her compensation for the misery and indignities she has undergone.

Is it not strange, my dear *Wilding*, that the censorious and unfeeling world make no distinction between those who become victims to the diabolical arts of seduction, and those who are constitutionally vicious, or whose fall is the effect of their own indiscretion, to speak in the gentlest terms?—Chastity, particularly in a female, is certainly a most estimable virtue, but I cannot think it a compensation for the absence of every other, nor that a single deviation from it should banish the unhappy defaulter from an intercourse with society. How many amiable females are there driven into all the horrors of habitual prostitution by the unrelenting severity of those who, by a contrary conduct, might have restored them

to virtue and happiness ; and this unforgiving disposition is exhibited by those whose numerous offences against their Creator have need of his continual mercy and forgiveness. I know not a more odious nor disgusting character than that of the censorious prude, whose own chastity, perhaps, might not have been preserved, had any one thought it worth their while to attack it. The truly virtuous are ever the most lenient, and will always view with kind commiseration, and assist in restoring to the paths of virtue, any unfortunate being, whose occasional lapse is not the consequence of depravity of heart. Such, my dear friend, may derive encouragement from our glorious Redeemer's Sermon on the Mount, wherein he says, "*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.*"

I hope the charming Mrs. *Lavington* will honor the amiable *Maria* with her confidence and esteem ; her countenance, and that of Miss *Howe*, will give her a consequence, that will overwhelm her former enemies
with

with merited confusion, and prove a rich repast to her grateful mind.

I congratulate you, my dear *Wilding*, on the birth of a son, and the recovery of Mrs. *W.* may it prove a mutual blessing to you, and cement that bond of union which happily subsists between you. Give my respects to the ladies, and tell them I hope to be with them early in the summer. Adieu! I am just setting out for London, and my horses are at the door, I shall therefore only add that I remain,

Your affectionate friend,

R. STANLEY.

LETTER [LXVIII.]

Mrs. MANDEVILLE to Miss HOWE.

Richmond, Yorkshire.

REJOICE with me, dear *Louisa*, rejoice with your *Clara*! A few days after I wrote to you last, Mr. and Mrs. *Barrymore* received

cards of invitation from *Sir John* and *Lady Wilmot*, who did me the honor to invite me also, but I excused myself, being much indisposed.

When my benefactress returned, she informed me that *Mr. Barrymore* expected a party of friends the next day ; “ and I would have you, my dear *Clara*, (said she) consult your glass, and set yourself off to advantage, as there will be a smart beau here, and who knows but you may make a conquest ! The widow has the best chance, (added she, smiling) though there will be two lovely girls of the party.”

I had not the least thought, my dear *Louisa*, who she meant ; and, as I conceived my *Henry* was irrecoverably lost, all men were alike to me, I therefore made no enquiry who the company were to consist of ; but in compliance with her request I bestowed a little extra pains in adorning my person, that I might not disgrace her table.

When the company arrived, I was sitting in the green-room. My spirits being very low,

low, I took up a guitar, and played the *Cottage Maid*, the words of which were descriptive of my situation. Just as I was repeating the following lines :—

*See thro' the vale my grief appears,
Sighing sad with falling tears ;
Oft thy image has appear'd,
As when I wander'd thro' the lonely grove.
See from my cheeks the colour flies,
And love's sweet hope within me dies
Oh, dearest Henry, thou'st betray'd
Thy love to thy poor cottage maid.*

A tear dropped on my cheek at the loved name, and my faculties were absorbed in contemplation, from which I was roused by the well-known voice of Mr. *Walpole* who addressed me in those favourite lines of *Goldsmith* :—

*Turn, Clara, turn, for ever dear,
My charmer turn and see
Thy own, thy long-lost Henry here,
Restor'd to love and thee.*

No pen can describe, my amiable friend,
the

the different emotions that took possession of my heart for a moment; and I sat trembling without the power to rise.

Mrs. *Barrymore* approached me, smiling, and said, " Give me leave, Mrs. *Mandeville*, to introduce Mr. *Walpole* to you." I had not the power to speak—joy, the unalloyed joy of reciprocal love, had nearly as fatal an effect on my nerves as I had suffered from my grief before. This dear, this generous lover, whom my kind benefactress had acquainted with the misfortunes and vicissitudes of life I had experienced, hurried to me, and supported me in his arms, seeing me ready to faint.

" Is it possible my beloved *Clara*, (cried he,) that you have a heart still to bestow on your faithful *Henry*?—Oh! how have I been deceived in Miss *Hervey*!—I wrote several letters to you from India, but the accounts I received from your pretended friend, *Harriet*, both surprised and shocked me; but never could eradicate the tender esteem I had for the first-chosen of my heart.—Say,
my

my constant *Clara*, can you—will you trust your happiness in my hands?—I come to offer you a heart long devoted to you—my fortune is easy, and independent of my father—consent to our union, and I shall be the happiest of men!”—Thus charmingly did he soothe me, my dear *Louisa*. My heart almost sprang out of my bosom, yet I advised him to think of some lovely maid whose fortune would merit his father’s approbation; and observed, that an union with me would draw his parent’s displeasure on him.

“ Matchless, disinterested woman! (said the flattering *Henry*) do not raise trifling objections—you must—you shall be mine!”

How sweetly did the moments glide away!—Oh! why, my dear Miss *Howe*—why did I ever murmur or repine; or distrust that watchful Providence that has now made me such rich amends.

We then joined the company, where I was introduced to the beautiful girl that had given me so much pain. It seems she is come to England on a visit to an uncle,
a merchant

a merchant of great wealth, and most reputable character. She blushed and appeared agitated when my *Henry* introduced me as his destined bride. I hope the sweet girl has not encouraged a growing partiality for Mr. *Walpole*. I find she is a most accomplished young lady, and of amiable manners. I hope she will honour me with her friendship.

Lady Wilmot has condescended to congratulate me on my approaching happiness; and pleasure is expanded on every countenance. As Miss *Sommerville* was to remain with *Lady Wilmot* for some time, Mr. *Barrymore* invited Mr. *Walpole* to spend a few days at Aldove-house, his constitution being extremely delicate. An intire eclaircissement has taken place between us. Oh, my *Louisa*! how unworthy was Miss *Hervey* of my friendship! but as love was the cause I freely forgive her.

At breakfast the next morning, he entertained us with his adventures in India, and his anxiety of mind at being banished from
his

his *Clara* by a mercenary father. He then proposed an early marriage, painting my defenceless situation in the world, and the necessity I had for a protector.

Just then the Reverend Mr. *Brook* sent up his name. I introduced this good man, whom I regarded as a father, to Mr. *Walpole*. He rejoices in the happy prospects now before me, and joins with *Henry* in fixing an early period for our union, so that a few days will determine my fate. He has taken a house in Grosvenor Place, has bespoke a very handsome carriage; and has already made me several valuable presents. Oh, Heavenly Providence, grant that I may not be too presumptuous on thy bounty! But, my dear friend, the chief sentiment I feel in the happy prospects before me, is that of having it in my power to discharge the many obligations I am under to my much esteemed friends; and relieving the sighing heart of distress. My generous *Henry* is impatient for the ceremony to be over before his father arrives, who
is

is hourly expected. I wish my dear *Louisa* was here to share my happiness. Fain would I have postponed the happy day for a few weeks on account of my mourning.

“ You talk like a child, (replied my kind benefactress) how many surprising events have happened within these few years, to your own knowledge, likely to separate you for ever! then delay not the happiness that now awaits you.”

My kind friends, Mr. and Mrs. *B.* and Miss *Sommerville*, vie with each other in promoting my happiness, and chusing my cloaths: even the haughty *Lady Wilmot* has already changed her stile of behaviour, and has stooped to offer her friendship to the once-despised *Clara*. Her ladyship did me the honour to offer me a very elegant present on the occasion, which I humbly asked leave to decline accepting. I have no ambition, my dear *Louisa*, but to please my *Henry*, and he ever preferred neatness to finery and shew. Adieu, my dear friend! I will write again as soon as the ceremony
has

has taken place; but I am impatient to hear from you. Good night; a drowsiness steals through my senses, and will only permit me to add that I am my dear Miss *Howe's*

Happy and affectionate,

CLARA MANDEVILLE.

LETTER LXIX.

The Rev. Mr. BROOK to COLONEL LAVINGTON, at Ely Grove.

London.

I TAKE the earliest opportunity, my dear Sir, to acquaint you that, agreeable to your and Mrs. *Lavington's* request, and my own inclination, I called on Mrs. *Mandeville*. How agreeably was I surprised to find our dear *Clara* on the eve of being the happy wife of the wished-for partner of her soul—the generous *Henry Walpole!* who is just returned from India, with an affluent fortune,
and

and who she thought for a length of time was married. Her surprise and joy, you may suppose, were great, he being her first and only love.

I had flattered myself with an hope she would have accompanied me into Shropshire, where, in my friendship, and my *Anna's* sisterly affection, her health and peace of mind might be restored: but it gives me pleasure to find she is destined to a happier fate. How I blame myself, my dear friend, for being prejudiced against the amiable sufferer, by the insinuations of the base Miss *Hervey*! But her loved *Henry* will now shield her from the malice of all her enemies; and restore this unfortunate widow to the state of independence she was born to shine in, after having experienced the sharpest vicissitudes of life.

I have enjoyed a double pleasure in visiting London, to see the lovely and amiable *Lady Angelina*, who is now the happy consort of the noble *Lord Belmont*. Among her numerous admirers his lordship stepped forth,

forth, and ardently solicited her hand. She could not long remain insensible to his merits. Her noble brother thought her widowed state required a protector, and her children a father; and a few days ago they were united for ever. May they long live in mutual happiness, with an increase of family, like olive-branches surrounding their table, inheriting their father's sense and mother's virtues. The enraptured bridegroom has settled every thing to their mutual satisfaction. Such a copy of celestial joys rejoiced the noble heart of *Lady Meanwell*; and exhilarating her aged, drooping spirits, will give a pleasant evening to her setting sun.

I am just going on a visit of condolence to the noble *Lord T—*, whose misfortunes you have no doubt heard of. A treaty of marriage was on foot between his unfortunate son and Mr. *Sommerville's* niece, a very beautiful lady, just returned from India. Horror affails my very soul at the rehearsal of the late tragic event, and the fatal consequences attending

tending intemperance, which is much easier conceived than penned. It is said, that the modern opium *Mahomet* prohibits, was the cause of the dismal catastrophe of the two fond and most amiable brothers; the pride of their parents, and the admiration of all that had the honour of their acquaintance. Happy had they fallen in the field, in the service of their King and country. Such a fall would have been glorious to the brave, afflicted parent! and would have added more laurels to his aged veteran brow. May the all-searching eye of Heaven look down on him and his unhappy consort, with that benevolence which He alone can afford to the afflicted! Let their sorrows be a warning to the young, the rich, and sporting triumvirate—Learn, frail youth, that wisdom or discretion is not always attendant on the powerful or the great!—Oh, what must be the grief of a fond mother, and the blasted expectation of an indulgent father?—It would have pierced your heart, my dear *Colonel*, to have seen the tender
parent

parent in the agony of affliction, taking his final leave of his darling son—whilst the fond mother, dumb with grief, leaning on the partner of her woes, poured out her soul in an anguish of sorrow.

“ Yet a little while, (said this elegant youth,) and I shall possess the utmost of my wishes—I shall call the charming Miss *Sommerville* mine—and in her enjoy all that my soul can crave.”—Dreadful vicissitude, to perish in the sight of happiness!—O look on this woe, ye gay and careless!—attend to this event—and boast not of to-morrow—but weep over the miseries and errors of mankind!—But let me drop this melancholy subject; and assure my dear friends at Ely Grove, I will take an early opportunity to attend to all their commands; and believe me to be,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged Friend,

W. BROOK.

LETTER

LETTER LXX.

Miss HOWE to Mrs. MANDEVILLE, at
Dove-house.

Richmond, Yorkshire.

YOUR letter, my dear *Clara*, had such an effect on my spirits that I danced and sung with joy at your approaching happiness; and my mother also shared my joy. O may nothing intervene to interrupt your present views and happy union! What would I give to be with you on the happy occasion!—Oh the cruelty of his mercenary parent, that prevented your happiness so long!—I hope he will not arrive to disturb it now. The sweet Miss *Sommerville*, how I pity her, if she is sensible of your *Henry's* merits!—How terrible, my dear *Clara*, is hopeless love!—How amiable her attention to her happy rival.

I have had a delightful letter from *Captain Parker*, full of love and constancy. Believe

believe me, dear *Clara*, he mentions you with respectful esteem, and is impatient to catch the wandering olive, that *Hymen* may crown our wishes.

I must tell you of a little adventure I met with the other day. A company of strolling players having just arrived at our village, the tragedy of *George Barnwell* was given out for the night. I was tempted to go, for I heard a very handsome young fellow was to make his appearance in that character. Soon after the curtain was drawn up a lady and gentleman entered the next box to me; my attention was soon engaged by their conversation, which was chiefly about my dear *Clara* and her *Henry*; the name of *Elwood* was often mentioned too. I soon found that the lady was Miss *Hervey*, and her companion, Mr. *Medley*, the *Colonel's* friend. I think they will make an excellent match.—She spoke with great envy and malice of my dear friend, and seemed to dread the idea of your being Mrs. *Walpole*, as she has heard of his arrival. By her conversation

I found she was on a visit, in a very respectable family, in the neighbourhood, who, it seems, is related to her, but much superior in merit. But I am willing to believe that jealousy has been the original cause of her improper conduct. Mr. *Medley* was addressing her in the tenderest language of love he could invent; and I found that *Colonel Elwood* had recommended him to her.

I have, this moment, received a letter from my dear sister, with a pressing invitation to visit Ely Grove. She expects our loved friend, Mrs. *Norman*, and that, I hope, will be a sufficient inducement to my dear *Clara* to join a society of friends whose greatest pleasure will be in contributing to her happiness. My dear, kind Mamma, has consented to my happiness a few weeks, so you will address your next letter to me at Ely Grove. I am quite impatient to hear from my beloved friend—let me know if the happy knot is tied—Be particular in your dress, and the bride-maid's, who I suppose

suppose will be the lovely Miss *Sommerville*, who, I have been informed, was intended for the wife of the elegant *T—*, whose untimely fate we so much lament.

Mr. *Sommerville*, her uncle, is a branch of a noble family: he is possessed of a large fortune, and the benevolence of his heart is inexhaustible. Having no children he sent for his lovely niece to England, who he proposed settling the principal of his fortune on, and bestowing her on the now lamented youth; whose amiable manners, and valuable character, had won the old gentleman's good opinion, and he stood unrivalled in his friendship. Unhappy day that blasted his flattering hopes! Mr. *Sommerville* has a house in our neighbourhood. He lately set off for London, to bring this accomplished girl into Yorkshire. As I am deprived of my dear *Clara*'s company, I hope to find a pleasant substitute in her: Mr. *Sommerville* has promised to introduce me to her acquaintance: and, if your loved *Henry* will bring his dear *Clara* to Ely-grove,

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and then accompany me into Yorkshire, it will add to the happiness of,

Your affectionate,

LOUISA HOWE.

LETTER LXXI.

Miss BATEMAN to Miss HOWE.

Isle of Man.

WE are impatient to hear from you, my dear Miss *Howe*; my sister *Wilding* and I are just returned from a little excursion; we rose early this morning to see May-day ushered in with a ceremony which has something in itself pleasing, and may afford some amusement to my dear *Louisa*.

In the rural sports here, they retain something of the Arcadian simplicity; dancing in particular. In almost all their parishes, they chuse, from amongst the daughters of the most wealthy farmers, a young
maid

maid for the Queen of the May. She is drest in the most gay and fashionable manner, and is attended by about twenty others, who are called her maids of honour: she has also a young man, who is Captain, and has under his command a number of inferior officers, in opposition to the Queen of Winter; who is a man drest in woman's cloaths, with fur-hoods and tippets, and loaded with the warmest habits, like armour, to cover and defend the body; in the same manner are those drest who represent her attendants; nor is she without her captain and troops for her defence. Both being equipped as proper emblems of the beauty of spring and deformity of winter, they sallied forth from their respective quarters; the one proceeded by violins, flutes, clarinets, and French-horns; the other, with rough music of tongs and cleavers. Both companies meet on a common, and then their trains engage in a mock battle, or skirmish. If the Queen of Winter happens to get the better so as to take the

Queen of the May prisoner, the captive Queen is ransomed for as much as pays the expences of the day. After the ceremony, Winter and her company retire to a large barn, provided for the occasion, while the gentle Queen of May remains on the green, where, having danced a considerable time, they conclude the evening with a feast, consisting of every delicacy the season affords. The Queen and her Maids of Honor sit at one table, and the Captain, or General, with his troop at the other. The happiness which was spread over the countenances of the peasants, and the languishing sounds of distant music, prepared for the occasion, had a more pleasing effect on the sympathetic soul of *Evelina*, than all the studied refinements of a courtly ball-room.

On our return home we called at the Spa-well, which formerly, I am told, belonged to the nunnery. Feeling ourselves fatigued, we sat down under the shade of a large tree. You know *Evelina*'s romantic taste; she was forming a thousand embellishments

fishments for this little spot, whilst your *Lydia* fell into conversation with old *Mary*, the keeper of the well, who, with her numerous progeny, were sitting before her door.— On enquiring why the well had been so long neglected, she told me a very laughable story, that during her first lying-in, in the dead of the night, when all was still and quiet, she was visited by a troop of fairies, who regaled themselves with what lay on the table, such as bread and cheese, candle, brandy, &c. that as she lay trembling in bed, watching their motions, and regretting the loss of her good cheer, the Queen of the Fairies, as a punishment for her selfish disposition, blew a powder into her eye, which instantly deprived her of the sight of that organ; and since that period, in passing by the well, they have been saluted with such exquisite music, as no earthly instruments could produce. So you see, my dear *Louisa*, how powerfully superstition reigns in the breasts of the old rustics, as this illusion of the fancy has prevented their receiving be-

nefit from one of the fineft fprings in the univerfe.

At parting with my lover he engaged me in a promise to confent to our union on his return to Mona. I wrote to my dear old grandmother, and my uncle *Bateman*, in confequence, and hourly expect their reply, the iffue of which will determine my fate, as in fuch an important concern, I fhall implicitly abide by their decifion, which I am confident will be founded on the moft facred regard to my real intereft—— But my uncle's friend *Travely*, and the fweet *Eliza* have juft entered the avenue, and as *Evelina* is engaged in her little nurfery I muft go and receive them.

Adieu, my dear *Louifa*, I am impatient to know whether you will favor us with a vifit next fummer. In that delightful hope I fubfcribe myfelf,

Your affectionate,

LYDIA BATEMAN.

LETTER

LETTER LXXII.

Mr. BATEMAN to Miss BATEMAN,
Wilding Park, Isle of Man.

IT gives me great pleasure, my dear niece to hear that you have a prospect of settling yourself to advantage. In compliance with my dying sister's request I placed you and your sister under my mother's care, and she is entitled to the same duty and obedience as would be due to her were she living ; and which the whole tenor of your conduct convinces me you will chearfully pay. Believe me, my dear, I have no other wish in directing your conduct, than to promote your happiness ; and if the person on whom your affections are fixed appears worthy of them, in the eyes of my respected mother, and the gentle *Evelina*, whom I likewise wish you to consult, you have my free consent ; on their prudence I can firmly rely.

Should sensibility lead you to the hallowed tomb, where are deposited the remains

of my much-lamented *Juliet*, pay the sacred tribute of a tear for one who

Rever'd her living, and adores her dead.

Tell Mr. *Wilding* I congratulate him on the birth of his son, and assure him of my best wishes. Farewel, and believe me to be,

Your affectionate uncle,

W. BATEMAN.

LETTER LXXIII.

Mrs. BARRYMORE to Miss HOWE,
Richmond, Yorkshire.

MADAM,

Dove-house.

YOU will no doubt be surprized to receive a letter from a stranger, the contents of which will deeply affect your friendly heart. It is at the request of Mrs. *Mandeville* I write, who now lies dangerously ill in consequence of the
shock

shock she received by the sudden death of her beloved *Henry*.

The day before their intended marriage we spent at *Sir John Wilmot's*, as happy as the fondest hearts could wish. At night he complained of a slight pain in his head, which soon left him, and he resumed his wonted cheerfulness. On the fatal morning Miss *Sommerville*, who had undertaken the office of bride's-maid, presented *Clara* with an elegant diamond necklace, as a token of her esteem. Soon after which she entered the room, arrayed with all the neat and simple elegance of the Graces, in a silver muslin, which was a present from her *Henry*.

Mr. *Walpole*, who was himself a model of elegance, received her with open arms, and conducted her to the sofa, where, seating himself beside her, they began fondly to anticipate scenes of future happiness, when he was suddenly seized with a paralytic stroke, which deprived him of the use of one side. Mr. *Barrymore* sent immediately for a physician, but, alas, his skill was ineffectual, for

a few short hours put a period to his existence, and reduced us all from the most exalted state of human happiness, to the most profound wretchedness.

Had you witnessed the tender scene that took place during the awful suspense, your sympathetic mind would never have forgotten it, embracing her with the only arm over which he retained any power, his whole anxiety was centered in her, and he earnestly requested that an attorney might be procured, in order that he might secure her future independence ; observing, that it was the only consolation his present situation admitted, except that which arose from our friendship, which he entreated us to extend to the latest period of our existence. During this time the unhappy *Clara* was overwhelmed with the most painful sensations, supporting his almost inanimate head upon her bosom, which throbbed with unutterable woe, she administered every thing to him with her own hand ; till at length his speech having failed him, and his dissolution

lution evidently approaching, she was forced from him, and conducted by Miss *Sommerville* to her own chamber, where one fainting fit succeeded another with such rapidity as to give us the most alarming apprehensions for her life.

When his death, which took place soon after her quitting the room, was announced to her, she received it without any of those noisy and exclamatory emotions which generally characterize our sex; her bosom heaved with suppressed sighs, and her whole frame was agitated and convulsed; a settled gloom is displayed on her countenance, and her whole deportment too plainly announces the poignant grief which preys on her spirits.

The day after the shocking event I was surprized by the servant announcing the arrival of Mr. *Walpole's* father. On his entering the room I acquainted him with the sad circumstance, which shocked him beyond description; and as soon as his first emotions had a little subsided Mr. *Barrymore* stated to him the particulars of the unhappy *Clara*,
in

in hopes he would fulfil the generous intentions of his son, which the late arrival of the attorney had alone prevented ; but we found his disposition bore no resemblance to that of his son ; he accused her of having attempted to draw his *Henry* into a clandestine marriage ; but at Mr. *Barrymore's* repeated desire consented to see her.

She entered the room with faltering steps, leaning on Miss *Sommerville's* arm ; her tearful eye, and agitated appearance, plainly indicated the conflict in her breast, and before she could reach a chair, she sunk senseless to the floor. Overcome by the affecting scene his prejudice vanished, and on her discovering some returning sensations, he begged her to be comforted, assured her of his good-will, and promised to make some provision for her future subsistence. She was, however, too much affected to pay any great regard to his advice, but was removed to bed, and a composing draught administered, which I am happy to say had a good effect. Time, I hope, my dear Madam, will mollify

mollify her grief, and reconcile her to this dispensation of Providence. The remains of the much-lamented *Henry* were yesterday removed from our house. But I am sent for—*Sir John* and *Lady Wilmot* are below, they are come to comfort the poor mourner. Adieu, dear Madam, I fear I have intruded too long already on your patience, but the subject lays near the heart of,

Your humble servant,

LAURA BARRYMORE.

LETTER LXXIV.

SIR ROBERT STANLEY to Mr. WILDING.

DEAR *Charles*, I arrived in town a few days since, after spending some weeks in Shropshire, with *Captain Travers*, who is so well recovered that he is gone to join his regiment. *Colonel Elwood* has purchased his charming villa, with whom I lately spent a day.

day. His charming wife is not more admired for her lovely person, than her amiable disposition. She is indefatigable in her search after objects of charity, whom she relieves with an unsparing hand, so that she is equally admired by the poor and rich.— Her husband, who appears quite reformed, reflects on his former life with abhorrence, and by every generous attention to her worthy and pious father, endeavours to atone for his misconduct towards him.

I spent a few days at Ely-grove, with your friend *Colonel Lavington*. I am quite charmed with his amiable consort, who possesses an excellent understanding, and a most benevolent heart. Their attention to the distresses of their neighbours, their liberal encouragement of industry, and their patronage of every species of merit, have diffused a spirit of happiness among the peasantry, which is rarely to be met with; while their politeness and urbanity towards the neighbouring gentry, have gained them universal respect and esteem. I had the pleasure,

sure, likewise, of seeing Mrs. *Bateman*, who talked with delight of her intended visit to Mona.

Mrs. *Lavington*, with a goodness of heart she is distinguished for, paid Mrs. *Elwood* a visit, and I accompanied her. The sweet bride received her with that amiable, easy humility, and elegant attention, as convinced me her mind is adorned with every virtue. You see the power the softer sex have over us when they chuse to exert themselves. This lovely girl, by her prudent conduct, and the sweetness of her manners, has reformed one of the most dissipated rakes.

You say the life of retirement you live in, prevents you from seeing what passes in the great world; you desire I will divert you with the news of the town, which is at present extremely crowded; occasioned by the happy event of the nuptials of the beauteous blossom of the British Court. I stayed some time at St. James's, where parental royalty, and brotherly love, displayed their brilliant parts, like so many heavenly luminaries,

ninaries, which gave lustre to the admiring spectators.

The royal bride looked divinely fair—the lily and the rose contended in forming her complexion. She approached the altar in the most superb dress of white and silver—her hair was adorned with a crown of diamonds—while the white plumes nodded majestically over her graceful brow—her crimson velvet cloak was supported by four bridesmaids, dressed uniformly in white and silver. She was surrounded by the angelic group of graceful and beautiful royalty.—O may she enjoy, in that clime to which she will soon be transplanted, that happiness so surely promised the children of the righteous!

Yesterday I dined with *Lord* and *Lady Belmont*, and in the evening attended them to Covent Garden Theatre. I do not wonder at the general admiration the charming *Lady Belmont* met with from the audience—she looked extremely lovely—and it being her first appearance in public since her nuptials, the house was extremely crowded.

The

The impressions of magnificence and grandeur, which are excited when this superb building is brilliantly illuminated, and filled with beauty, taste, and elegance, are beyond description.

In the next box to us sat *Sir John* and *Lady Wilmot*, accompanied by a most lovely young creature from India. She is a diamond of the first water, *Charles*, and I am more than half inclined to be in love with her. I dine with *Sir John* to-morrow, and hope to be introduced to this paragon, who leaves Richmond in a few days, to accompany her uncle into Yorkshire. Some time this summer I intend myself the pleasure of spending a few weeks in your favorite isle. Remember me respectfully to the ladies, and believe me to be, dear *Charles*,

Your sincere Friend,

R. STANLEY.

LETTER

LETTER LXXV.

Miss HOWE to Mrs. MANDEVILLE, at
Dove-house.

Ely Grove.

MY DEAR CLARA,

YOU cannot conceive the grief and surprise I felt at perusing Mrs. *Barrymore's* letter. Oh, my beloved friend, how very hard is your fate, after such repeated vicissitudes, to have arrived so near the summit of happiness, and to be so suddenly precipitated therefrom, certainly requires no small share of fortitude to sustain. But remember the events of this world are governed by a Providence equally omniscient and omnipotent; and that a humble resignation to his will, however adverse to our wishes, is the duty of us frail mortals; a duty the compliance with which will infallibly secure us an abundant recompence hereafter. Pardon me, my dear *Clara*, for suggesting these
hints

hints to your well-informed mind, which is much more capable of teaching than being taught by me.

Caroline was exceedingly affected at the intelligence, and was with difficulty preserved from fainting. She begs me to assure you of her friendship, and joins me in the pleasing hope of seeing you here; a few months' absence from a situation where every object tends to remind you of your irreparable loss, joined to the tender and consolatory attention of your friends, will alleviate your sorrows, and restore your wonted placidity of heart. In this hope we are also joined by the amiable *Anna Brook*, who has shed a torrent of tears at the relation of your sorrows.

Do me the favor to present our best thanks to Mrs. *Barrymore* for her obliging letter;—her affectionate and tender behaviour to you, my dear *Clara*, has secured her our lasting esteem and gratitude, though we almost envy her the pleasure resulting from administering to your happiness.

Adieu,

Adieu, my amiable friend, that your peace of mind may be speedily restored, is the constant prayer of

Your sincere Friend,

LOUISA HOWE.

LETTER LXXVII.

Mrs. MANDEVILLE to Miss HOWE.

AFTER the variegated events I have experienced, I resume my pen, to thank my beloved Miss *Howe*, for her kind and consolatory epistle ; the pious admonitions it contains do equal honor to her head and heart. Yes, my truly amiable friend, the ground of my consolation, and the source of my hope is, that the affairs of this world are not governed by chance, but directed by a beneficent Being, who has some gracious intention to fulfil in every operation he performs ; and that those dispensations which
are

are of an afflicting nature at present, will ultimately redound to our permanent advantage. Were it not for these consolatory reflections, with which the Holy Scriptures are so abundantly stored, I never could support my present affliction, but my mind would be sunk in the vortex of despair, notwithstanding the kind attention and tenderness of my much-esteemed friends—Oh, my *Henry*, the blissful thought of joining your pure ethereal spirit, in those cloudless skies where sorrow and sighing never enter, and death and parting shall be known no more for ever, lightens the load of my affliction, and enables my wounded spirit to sustain the severest pang that ever tortured the female breast.

You judge rightly my dear *Louisa*, of my benefactress; no pen can do justice to her kindness—she consoles me with the tenderest affection, and watches over me with more than maternal care. Supporting me to her dressing-room this morning, and, seating herself beside me, she soothed me in the most
 endearing

endearing manner.—“ Assure, yourself, my dear *Clara*, said she, you shall ever find in me a warm and sincere friend, who feels a tender concern for your sufferings, and an anxious desire to see them removed; Mr. *Barrymore*, who is equally concerned for your situation, has appointed a meeting with Mr. *Walpole*, in order to induce him to fulfil the generous intentions of his son with respect to your future prospects. The concern he expressed for your situation, at the last interview, gives us the most earnest hopes of success; but should he fail, on our friendship you may confidently rely for a secure asylum, and we shall esteem ourselves happy in every opportunity of administering to your comfort and convenience.”

I lifted my eyes to Heaven, with most sincere and fervent gratitude, and, throwing my arms round her neck, relieved my overcharged heart by weeping on her bosom. Just then *Lady Wilmot* entered the room, who, though naturally of a haughty disposition, and elated with her immense wealth,
yet

yet was much moved at the affecting scene before her, and with an engaging sensibility which I did not think she possessed, assured me of her friendship and good-will, and delivered me a letter, which on opening I found to contain a note of considerable value, sent by an unknown friend, and dated from Warwick street, Charing-cross. The handwriting was a female's, and my heart instantly recognized the generous donor. This repeated instance of her liberality, conveyed in the same delicate manner, has kindled the most lively sensations of gratitude in my mind. This benevolent friend delights in secret acts of goodness, and with peculiar grace, extends her benign influence to the needy and distressed of every description; but takes peculiar pleasure in pouring the balm of consolation into the widowed breast, and protecting the friendless and deserted orphan.

Soon after, the arrival of company calling Mrs. *Barrymore* and *Lady Wilmot* to the drawing-room, I sat down and contemplated

the various scenes of my past life. I was roused from this contemplation by the entrance of Miss *Sommerville*, who approached me with the utmost benignity, and endeavoured with that refined sensibility, peculiar to superior minds, to divert my attention, and prevent my mind from preying too much on itself. She is a most amiable girl, possesses a most clear and well-cultivated understanding, with a modesty and diffidence which render her qualifications additionally estimable.

I hope the gallant *Parker's* return will be graced with the olive, and those laurels he has so bravely earned. May your union be speedily accomplished, and may no misfortune intervene to disappoint your expected happiness. Assure *Colonel* and *Mrs. Lavington* of my grateful thanks for their kind invitation. Adieu, my dear *Louisa*.

I am most sincerely your's,

CLARA MANDEVILLE.

LET-

LETTER LXXVII.

MR. WILDING, to SIR ROBERT STANLEY.

YOUR letter, my dear *Sir Robert*, afforded us great satisfaction; the welfare of our friends in Shropshire, and the assurance of Mrs. *Bateman's* intended visit have given us much pleasure, and wound my *Evelina's* spirits to the highest pitch. *Lydia* and I intend meeting her half way, and we hope to find her accompanied by Miss *Howe*. I am glad to hear that *Elwood* has renounced his former conduct, and doubt not but he will experience more satisfaction in his present connections than could possibly result from his late dissipated courses.

I have had a delightful ride across the mountains, to the north side of this isle, to escort *Eliza* to Wilding Park. She has promised *Evelina* to bear her company in our absence. Some parts of the road from Douglas to Ramsay, I understand formerly, were

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scarce

scarce passable, even for horses ; but, to the credit of the natives, they are now much improved.

At a small distance from the road I perceived a pretty cottage, and a party of rustics, seated beneath the shade of a large sycamore which stood close to the door.—Feeling myself thirsty, I dismounted, and entered the little avenue, which was decorated with evergreens and flowering shrubs in a very neat and pretty style.

On approaching this little groupe, I requested a glass of water ; when a lovely young woman rose from her seat, and in the most engaging manner invited me to partake of such refreshments as their cottage afforded, and which she immediately placed before me.

On quitting this cottage, and procuring a guide, I struck across the mountains till I reached the foot of a remarkable high hill, called Skyatt, where having met Mr. *Freely*, and a party of his friends, we rambled to the summit, and the day being remarkably clear,

I

plainly

plainly discerned Ireland, Scotland, and Cumberland hills, &c. The humble villages and glens that join this lofty hill, and the view of distant mountains, towns, streams, and plains whitened with sheep, afford the most delightful and extensive prospects my eyes ever beheld ; and I think would afford an excellent opportunity to display the abilities of some of our first-rate artists.

Come then, my dear *Sir Robert*, and partake of Mona's charms: the ladies are impatient to see you, but hope you will bring your heart with you, as *Lydia* and *Eliza* are ready to enter into a contest for it ; but I fear Miss *Sommerville* is already in possession of the inestimable treasure.

Farewel, my dear friend, *Evelina* complains of my absence. I have written you a long letter, from which, if you derive any entertainment, it will amply gratify,

Your affectionate friend,

CHARLES WILDING.

LET-

LETTER LXXVIII.

Mrs. MANDEVILLE to the Rev. Mr. BROOK.

IT gave me great pleasure, my dear friend, to hear of your welfare, and that of the gentle *Anna*; but am sorry your gout prevents me the favour of a visit. On my arrival at Ely Grove, I had the unexpected happiness of meeting, in addition to my other much respected friends, the amiable and beneficent Mrs. *Norman*, that kind friend, who first recommended me to the patronage and protection of my adored benefactress, Mrs. *Barrymore*. I was received by the whole groupe with the most sympathetic tenderness, and they seemed to vie with each other in their exertions to cheer my languid spirits. Oh, my friend! how shall I display my gratitude for such inestimable and unmerited goodness! May that Almighty Being, who delights in benevolence and mercy, richly compensate them!

I hope to be with you, my dear Sir, in a
few

few days, to receive from your edifying conversation a more perfect establishment in the great duty of resignation to the sovereign will of the great Disposer of all events.

Your obliged and affectionate,

C. M——

LETTER LXXIX.

Mrs. MANDEVILLE to Mrs. BARRYMORE.

DEAR MADAM,

INNUMERABLE have been the favours which yourself and Mr. *Barrymore* have conferred on me, and which have made a most grateful impression on my heart: You have tenderly sympathised with me in my afflictions, and generously endeavoured to alleviate them.

As we passed by the village where my poor faithful *Susan* lives, I stopped to give her some relief. Her tender attention to me
through

through the former part of my trials and afflictions, justly entitled her to this mark of my attention.

I find Miss S. is arrived in Yorkshire. She has been greatly my friend, and I wish her to know the sentiments of gratitude my heart feels.

Farewel, my esteemed friend. My health is so bad, that I can expect no happiness in this world. Life, like a winter's day, is short. Time, like the shadow on a dial, is fleeting, and an awful eternity approaches.

Once more farewel, my dearest friend. I am your's, with the tenderest affection,

C. M——E.

THE END.



